Shojo Beat Manga

BABY & Me

17

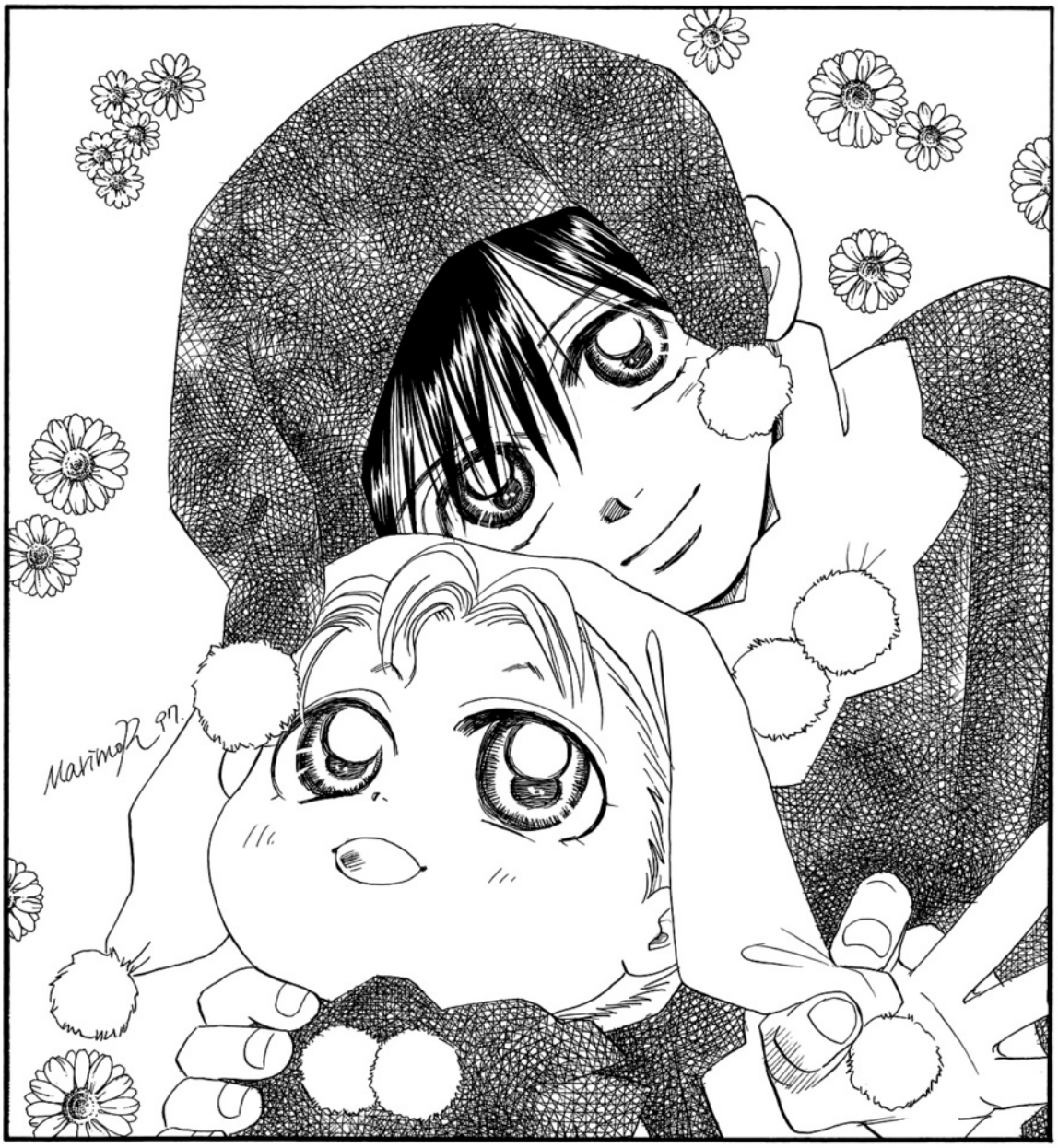
Story & Art by

Marimo Ragawa

Shojo Beat

BABY & Me

Vol. 17



Story & Art by **Marimo Ragawa**

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BABY & ME, Vol. 17
Shojo Beat Manga Edition

Story & Art by
MARIMO RAGAWA

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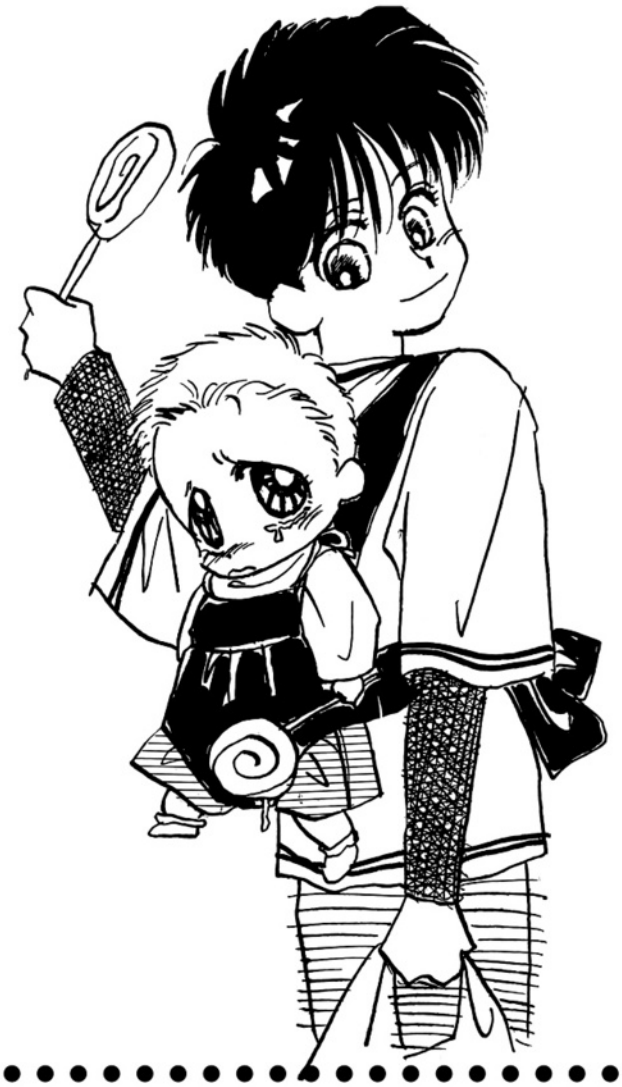


BABY & ME

Creator: Marimo Ragawa

SBM Title: *Baby & Me*

Date of Birth: September 21

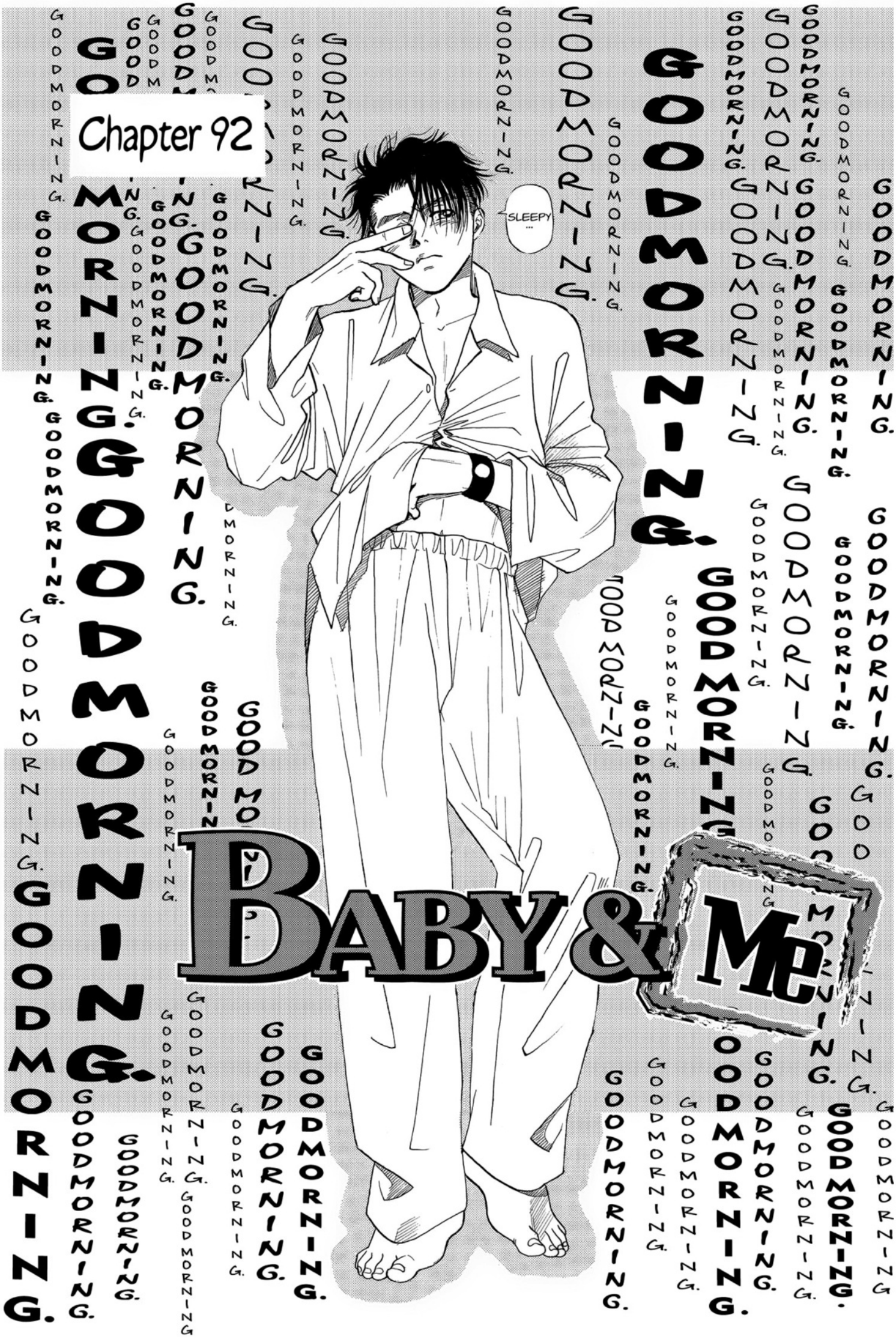
Blood Type: B

Major Works: *Time Limit*, *Baby & Me*, *N.Y. N.Y.*, and *Shanimuni—Go* (Desperately—Go)

Marimo Ragawa first started submitting manga to a comic magazine when she was 12 years old. She kept up her submissions for four years, but to no avail. She decided to submit her work to the magazine *Hana to Yume*, where she received Top Prize in the Monthly Manga Contest as well as an honorable mention (Kasaku) in the magazine's Big Challenge contest. Her first manga was titled *Time Limit*. *Baby & Me* was honored with a Shogakukan Manga Award in 1995 and was spun off into an anime.

Ragawa's work showcases some very cute and expressive line work along with an incredible ability to depict complex emotions and relationships. Some of her other works include *N.Y. N.Y.* and the tennis manga *Shanimuni—Go*.

Ragawa has two brothers and two sisters.


Chapter 92
SLEEPY...
GOODMORNING.
BABY & Me

YAAY♡
THERE'S A SCHOOL FESTIVAL AT THE JUNIOR HIGH TODAY!
AH!
TOMOYA! YOU'RE UP EARLY!
WHY ARE YOU WEARING YOUR SCHOOL UNIFORM, ASAKO? IT'S SUNDAY. AND WHY THE GOOD MOOD?
WUMP
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
...
YAY♡
YAY♡
NO, YOU CAN'T!
YEAH? WELL, MAYBE I'LL GO, TOO.
I used to go to that school.

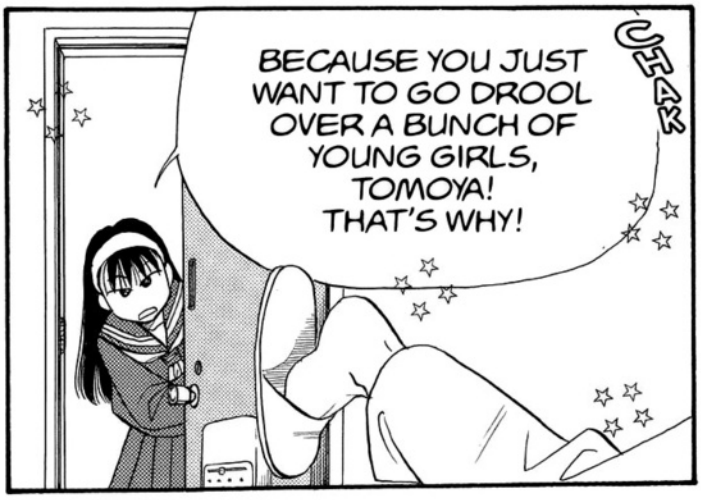
KLAK

I'LL SEE YOU LATER.

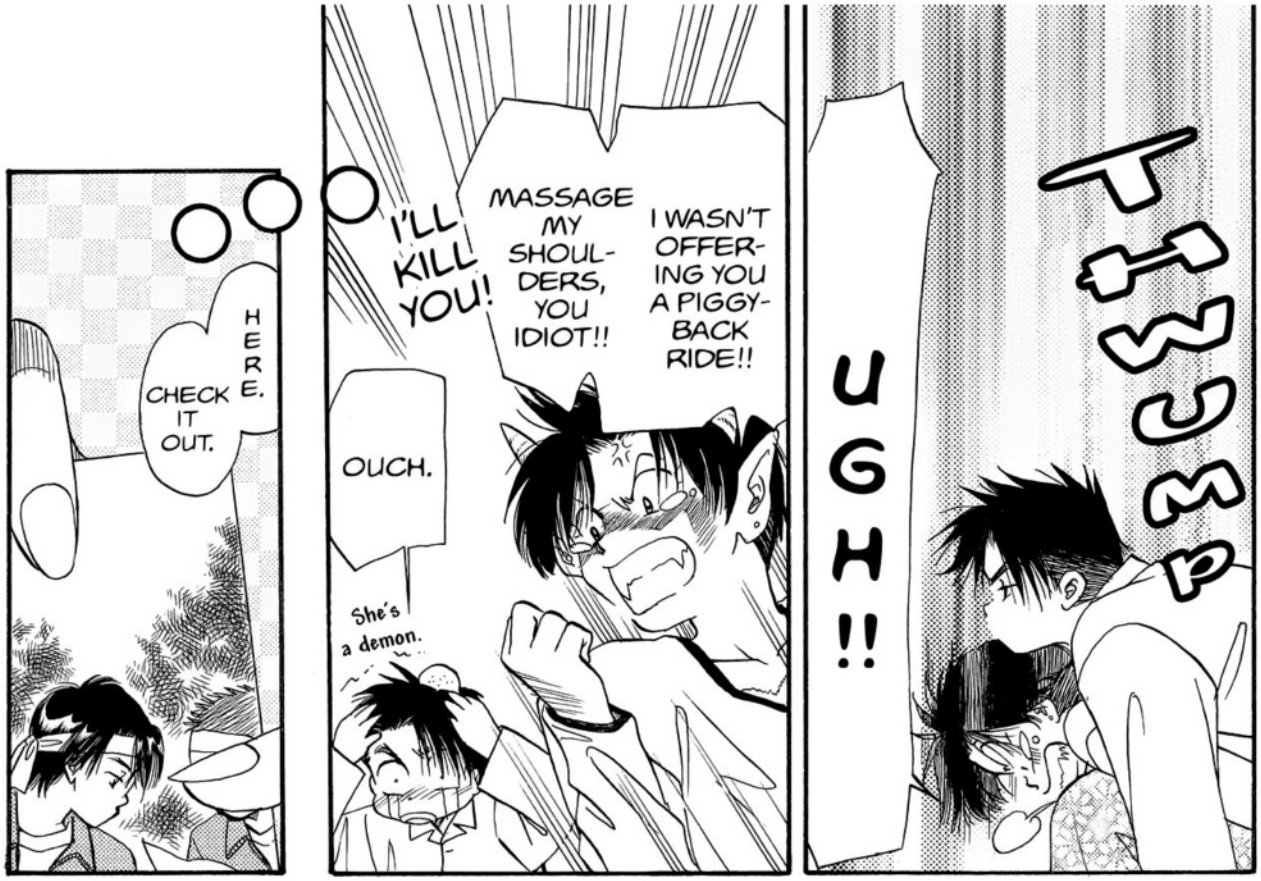
NO REASON!
WHAT?
IT'S JUST EMBARRASSING TO HAVE FAMILY AROUND!
WHY NOT?

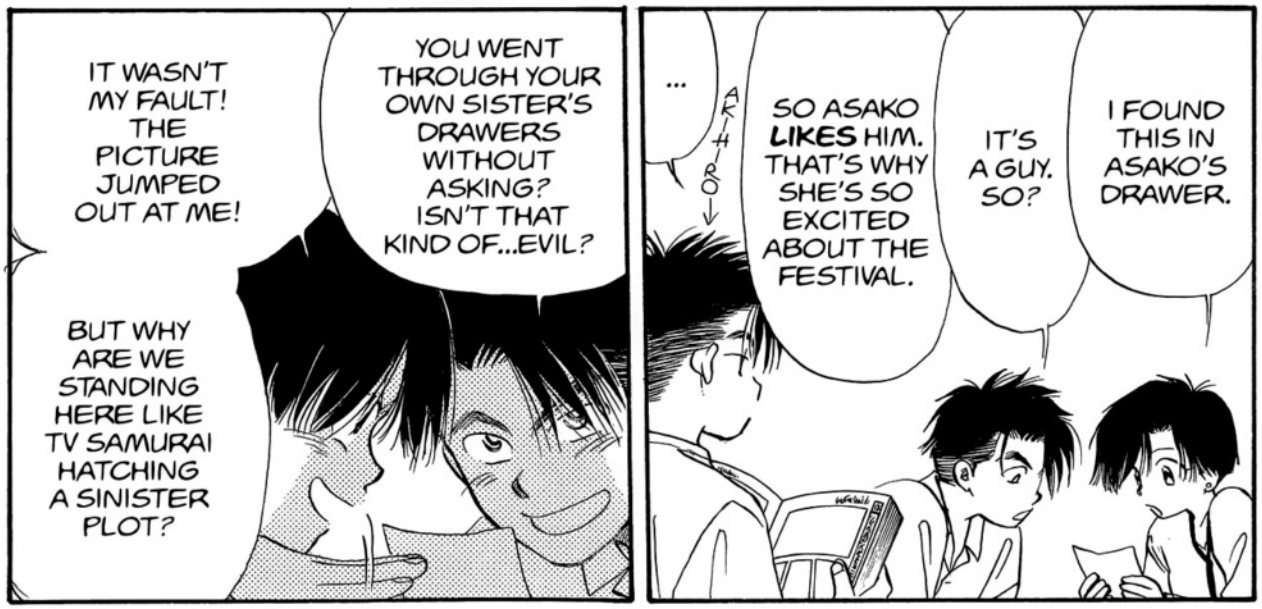
WHUP
EMBARRASSING? WHY?

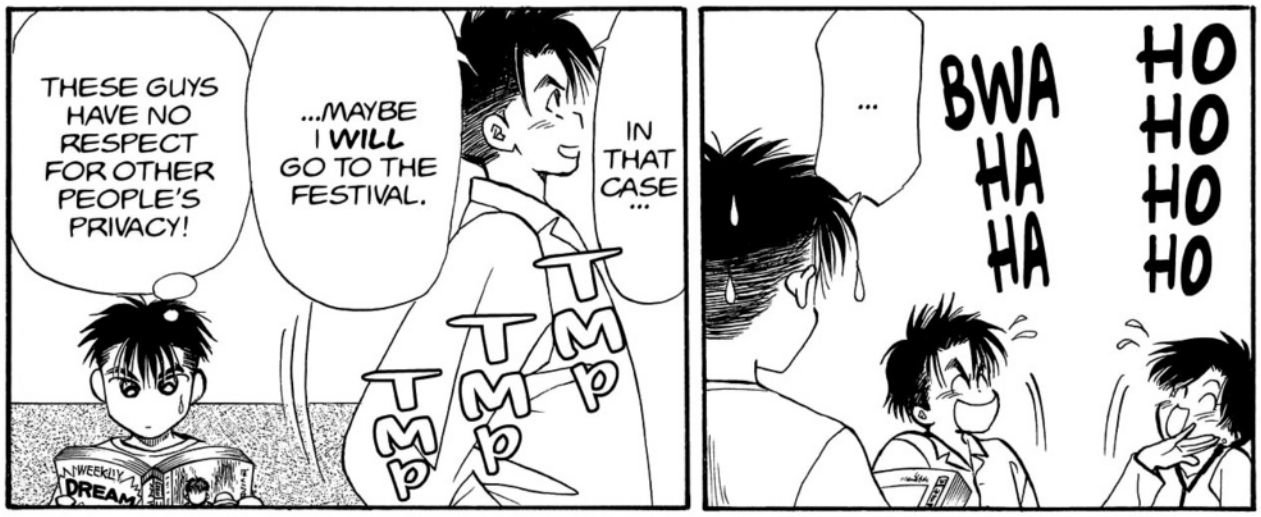
JUST TELL ME, AKEMI!
WHAT IS IT?
I'LL TELL YOU...
...BUT FIRST, RIGHT HERE, PLEASE.
PAT
PAT


BECAUSE YOU JUST WANT TO GO DROOL OVER A BUNCH OF YOUNG GIRLS, TOMOYA! THAT'S WHY!
CLAK

...ASAKO DOESN'T WANT US TO COME TO THE FESTIVAL?
HEE HEE
WANNA KNOW THE REAL REASON...


HERE.
CHECK IT OUT.
I'LL KILL YOU!
MASSAGE MY SHOULDERS, YOU IDIOT!!
I WASN'T OFFERING YOU A PIGGYBACK RIDE!!
OUCH.
She's a demon.
THUMP
UGH!!


YOU WENT THROUGH YOUR OWN SISTER'S DRAWERS WITHOUT ASKING? ISN'T THAT KIND OF...EVIL?
IT WASN'T MY FAULT! THE PICTURE JUMPED OUT AT ME!
BUT WHY ARE WE STANDING HERE LIKE TV SAMURAI HATCHING A SINISTER PLOT?
I FOUND THIS IN ASAKO'S DRAWER.
IT'S A GUY. SO?
SO ASAKO LIKES HIM. THAT'S WHY SHE'S SO EXCITED ABOUT THE FESTIVAL.
...
ARIHRO


IN THAT CASE...
...MAYBE I WILL GO TO THE FESTIVAL.
THESE GUYS HAVE NO RESPECT FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S PRIVACY!
WEEKLY DREAM
TMP TMP TMP
...
BWA HA HA
HO HO HO HO

Author's Note Part 1

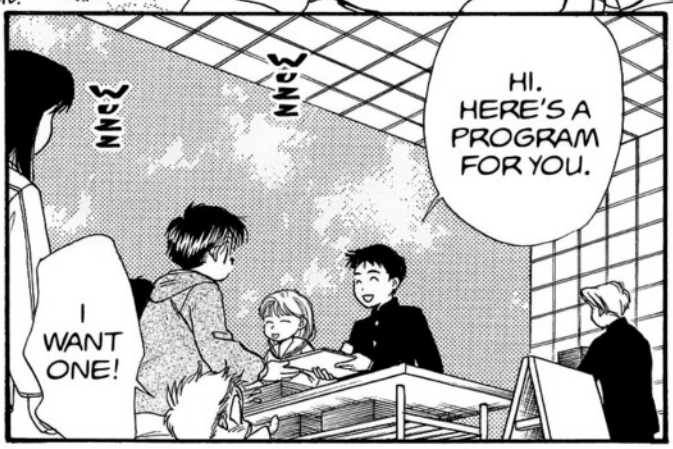
This is Marimo Ragawa. I just finished coloring some covers, so I'm exhausted. I don't mind coloring one or two covers at a time, but three is too much.

Anyway, here's volume 17. After I finished coloring the cover, I noticed that the faces were too much in close-up. If you compare this cover to all the previous volumes, you'll see the difference right away. Oh well, never mind.

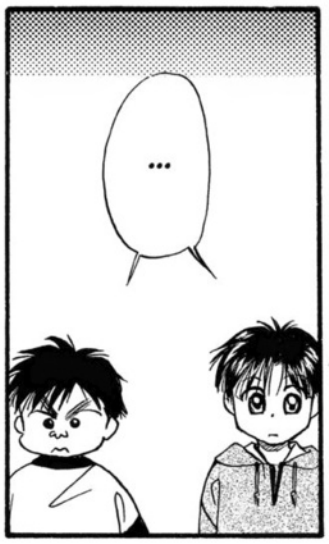
By the way, I have a hard time sleeping sometimes. Tell me if you know a way to get a good night's sleep. Spring and fall are especially bad. I think it's a disease.

*Cho-san was the nickname of Chosuke Ikariya, leader of the comedy group The Drifters. "Uoissu!" was his signature greeting.

Taiyaki are fish-shaped pastries filled with sweet red bean paste.



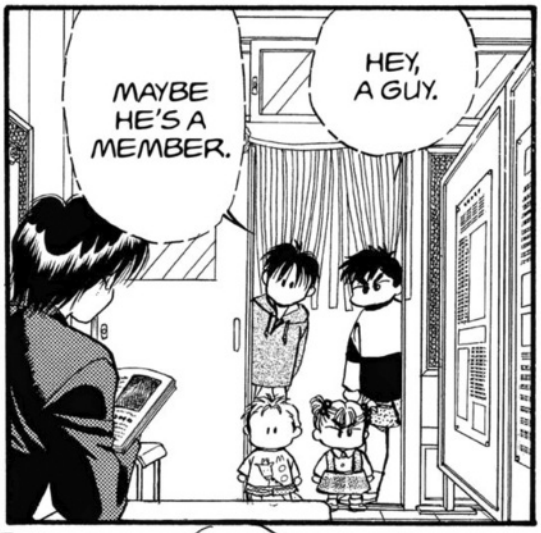
BAMP
BAMP
BAMP
BAMP
...ONE OF FUJII'S SISTERS.
THAT'S ASAKO...
OH...
DOOM
HI, ASAKO.
HOW ARE YOU?
HUH?
ARE YOU GOING IN, ASAKO?
YOU WERE LOOKING IN THERE.
GULP
THE AUDIO-VISUAL CLUB.
AV STUDY CLUB
WHO'S THAT?
TAKUYA MET THE WHOLE FUJII FAMILY IN VOLUME 12, CHAPTER 63.
H-HOW ARE YOU?
OH, HI, T-TAKUYA. HI, MINORU.
SWIP
HEWO.


...

...JUST PASSING BY!
TMp
TMp
TMp

I WAS...

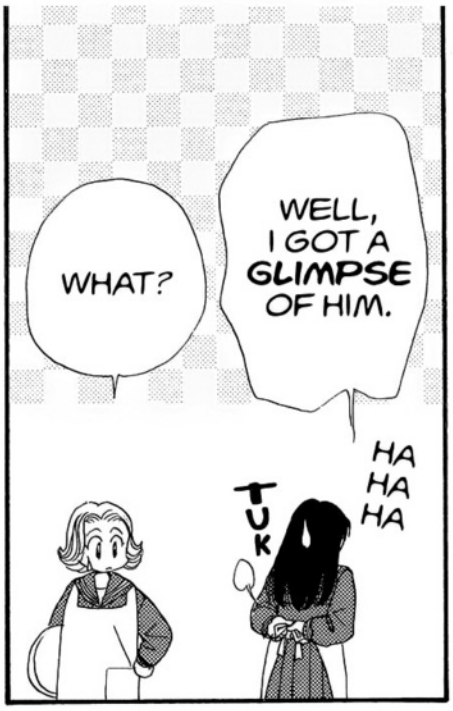
OH.
HELLO.
AV EQUIPMENT


HEY, A GUY.
MAYBE HE'S A MEMBER.

WANNA CHECK IT OUT?

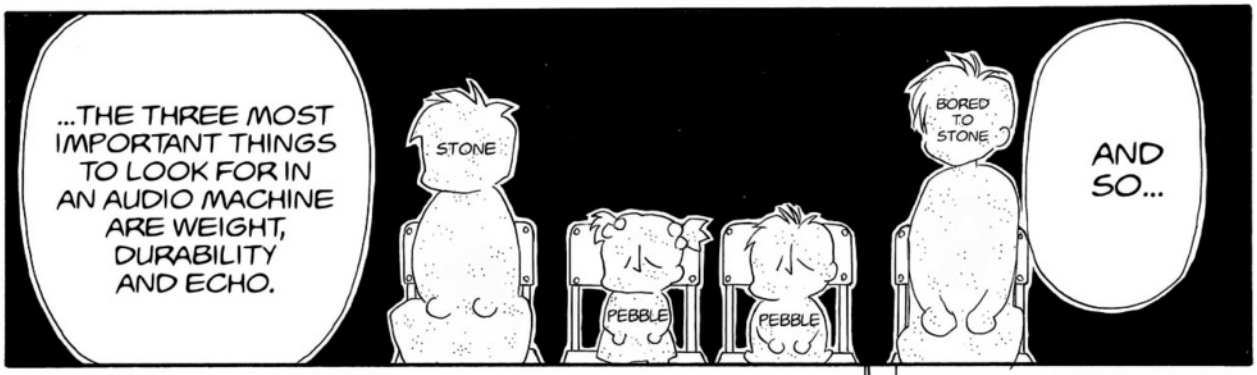
I'M DOING IT THIS MORNING.
I'M NOBUKAZU SAKAMAKI. NICE TO MEET YOU.

HI.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
WE'RE GIVING LECTURES ABOUT HOW TO TELL WHICH AUDIO MACHINES HAVE THE BEST SOUND.
HEWO.

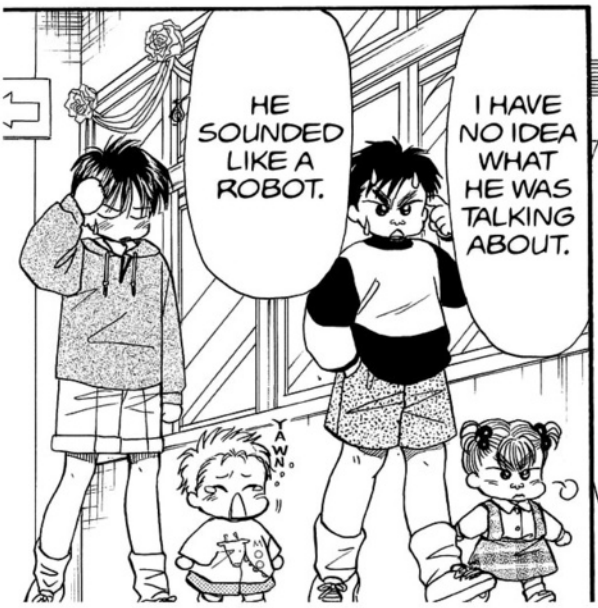

WHAT?
WELL, I GOT A GLIMPSE OF HIM.
TUK
HA HA HA

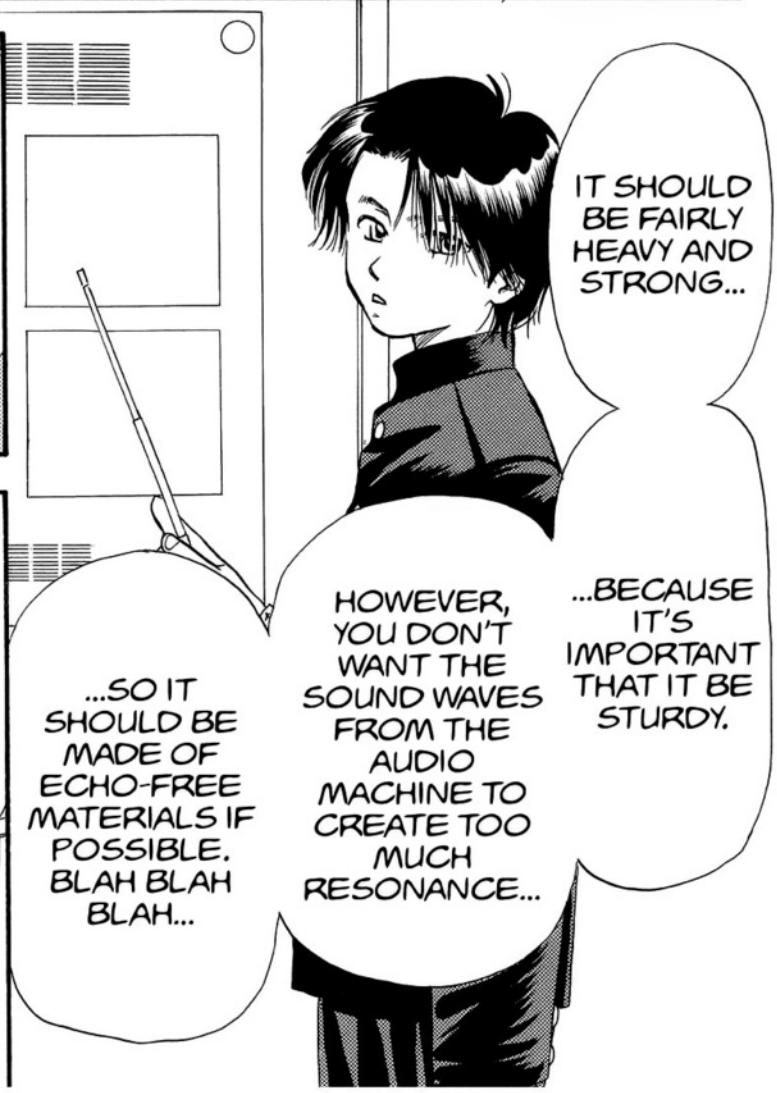
DID YOU SEE SAKA-MAKI?
HOW DID IT GO?
HUH?

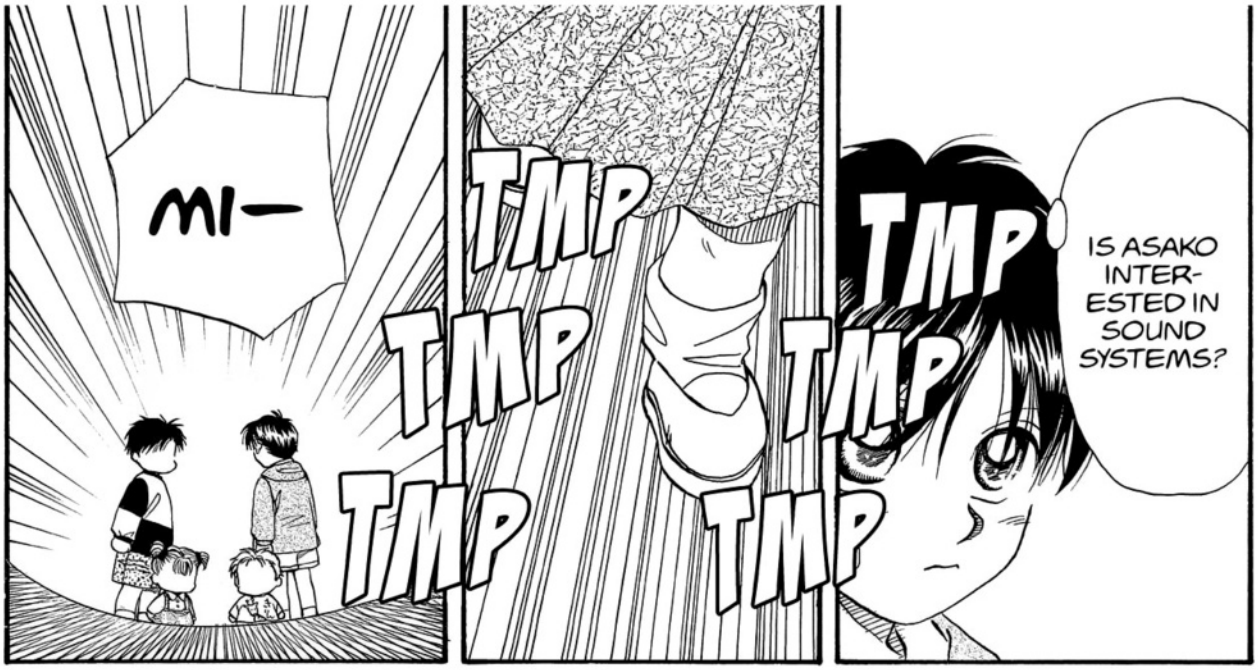
WELL, ASAKO?
WUNN
WUNN


...THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO LOOK FOR IN AN AUDIO MACHINE ARE WEIGHT, DURABILITY AND ECHO.
STONE
PEBBLE
PEBBLE
BORED TO STONE
AND SO...

...COME BY AND SEE ME IN THE MORNING.
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUES-TIONS...
THAT'S IT.


HE SOUNDED LIKE A ROBOT.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT.
YAWN.

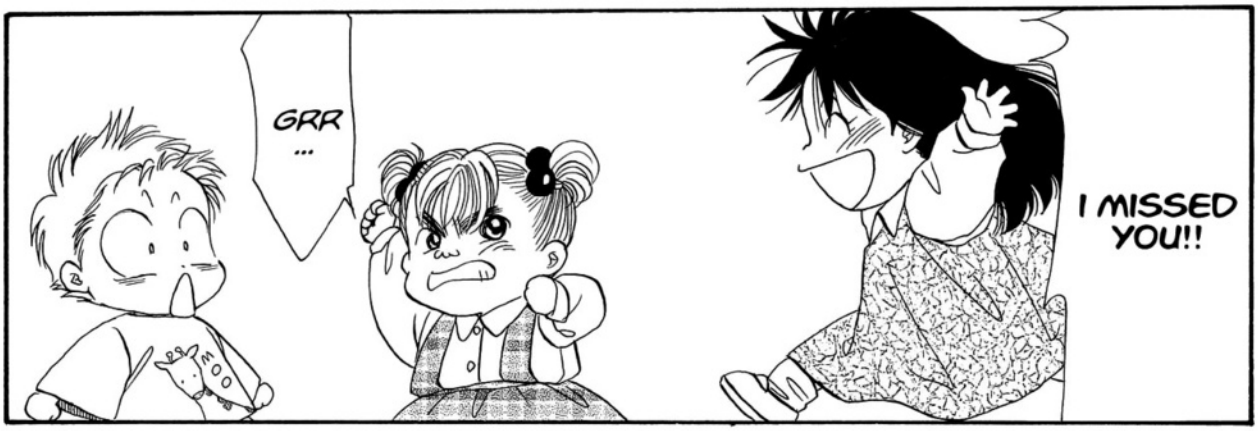

IT SHOULD BE FAIRLY HEAVY AND STRONG...
...BECAUSE IT'S IMPORTANT THAT IT BE STURDY.
HOWEVER, YOU DON'T WANT THE SOUND WAVES FROM THE AUDIO MACHINE TO CREATE TOO MUCH RESONANCE...
...SO IT SHOULD BE MADE OF ECHO-FREE MATERIALS IF POSSIBLE. BLAH BLAH BLAH...

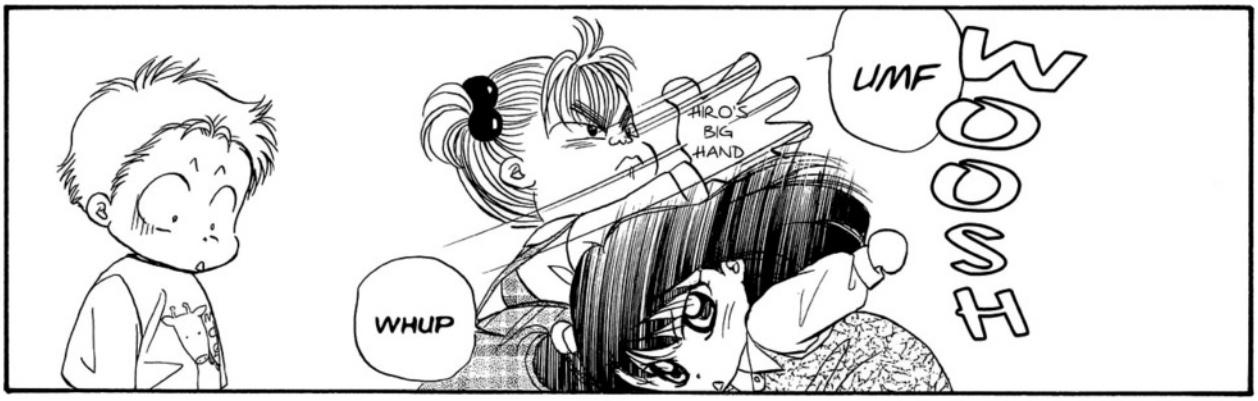

MI—
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP
IS ASAKO INTER-ESTED IN SOUND SYSTEMS?

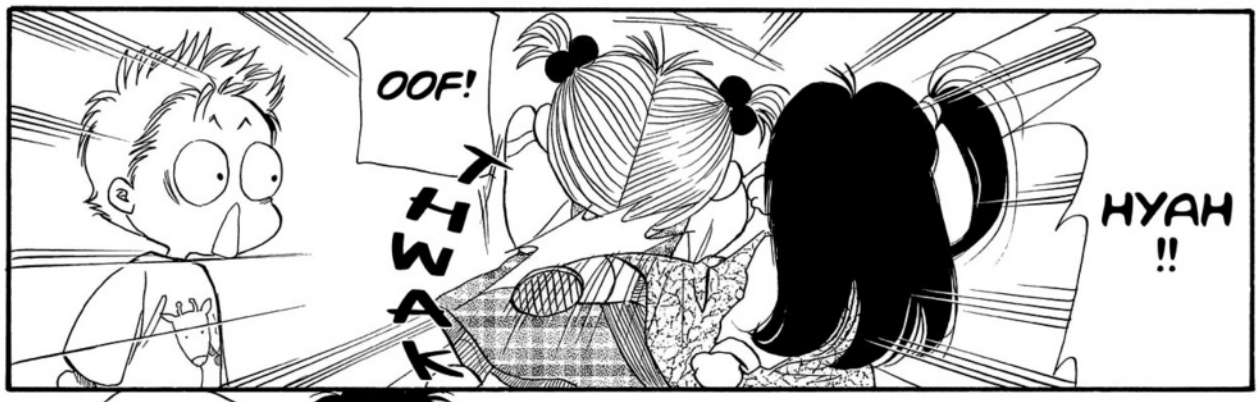
UOY
MY DARLING!♡

HUH?
—RU!
TMP
TMP

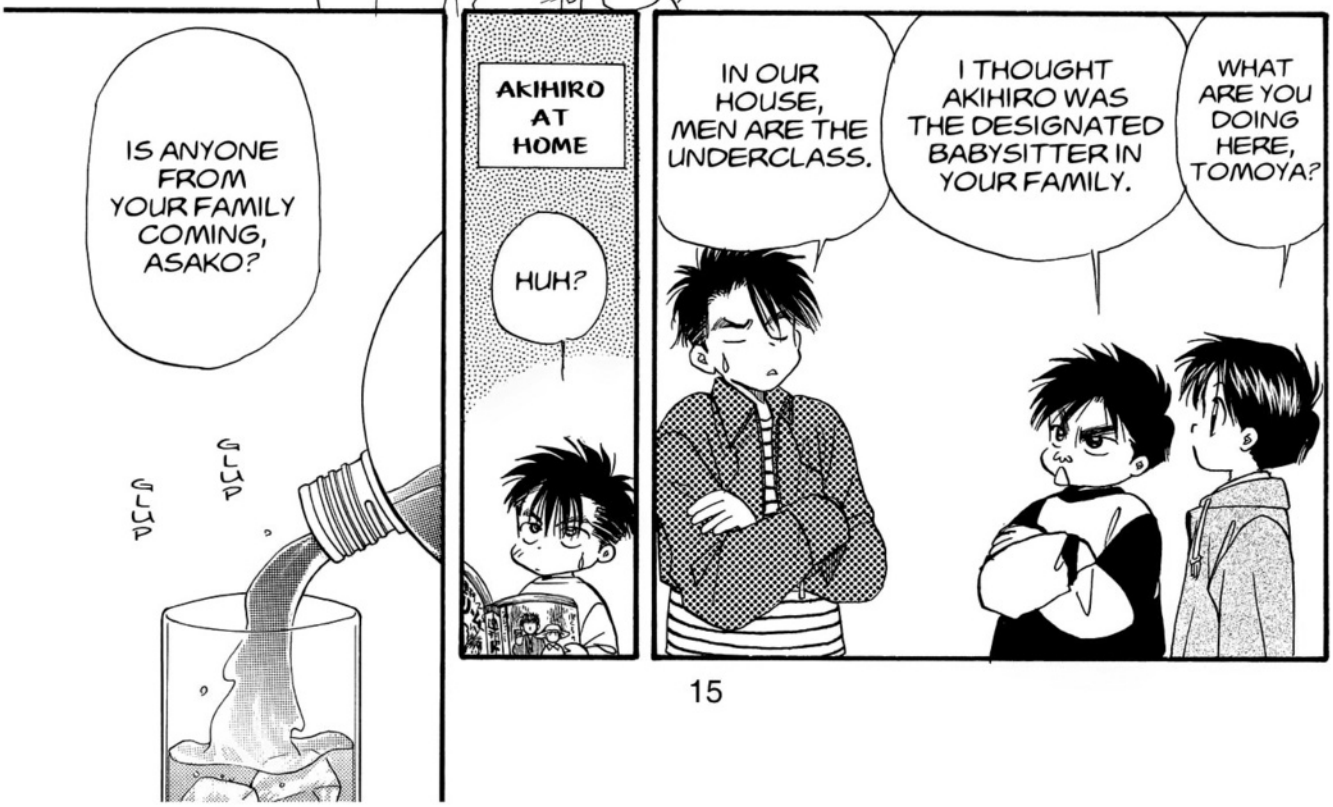
TMP
TMP
—NO—

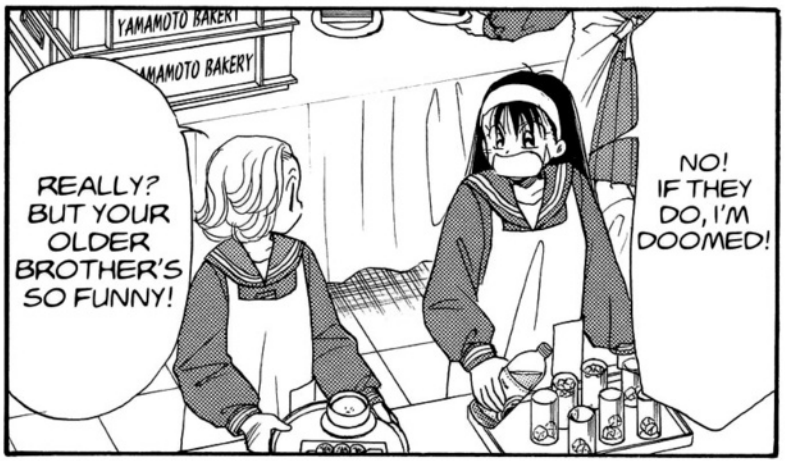

GRR ...
I MISSED YOU!!

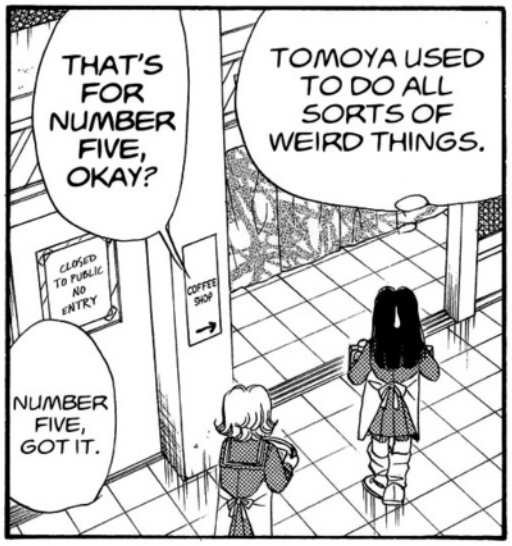

UMF
WOOSH
HIRO'S BIG HAND
WHUP

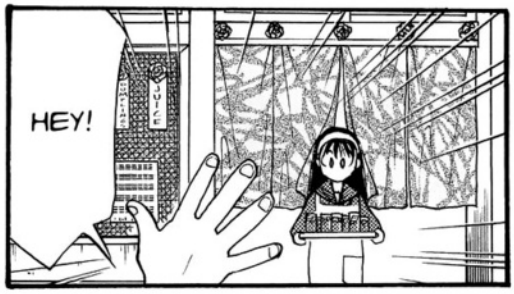

OOF!
THWAK
HYAH !!

IT'S THE ENOKI BROTHERS AND THE GOTOH KIDS.
HEY.
HUH?
YAY! HOW ARE YOU?
MINORU'S PETRIFIED.
THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE KEEPS ESCALATING, HUH?
WAHAHA
GOTCHA! SEE? I CAN FIGHT TOO!!
UGH!


IS ANYONE FROM YOUR FAMILY COMING, ASAKO?
GLUP
GLUP
AKIHIRO AT HOME
HUH?
IN OUR HOUSE, MEN ARE THE UNDERCLASS.
I THOUGHT AKIHIRO WAS THE DESIGNATED BABYSITTER IN YOUR FAMILY.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, TOMOYA?


YAMAMOTO BAKERY
YAMAMOTO BAKERY
REALLY? BUT YOUR OLDER BROTHER'S SO FUNNY!
NO! IF THEY DO, I'M DOOMED!


THAT'S FOR NUMBER FIVE, OKAY?
TOMOYA USED TO DO ALL SORTS OF WEIRD THINGS.
CLOSED TO PUBLIC NO ENTRY
COFFEE SHOP
NUMBER FIVE, GOT IT.


HEY!
JUICE

SCHOOL FESTIVAL TWO YEARS AGO TOMOYA, EIGHTH GRADE ASAKO, SIXTH GRADE
WA HA HA HA
GRADE 3 CLASS A DRAG COFFEE SHOP
TRY OUR COFFEE SHOP!
C'MON, YOU GUYS!
HIS FRIEND
GIVE US A TRY!
UM...
BLUSH
TOMOYA DRESSED LIKE A WOMAN TO PROMOTE A COFFEE SHOP.

SWIP
HI, ASAKO!
ASAKO!

SHING♡
THANK YOU FOR WAITING. ♡
GON
MINORU

BRR
WHAT... WHAT THE...?
BRR
WHO'S THAT?
OH, THAT'S FUJII. HE USED TO GO TO THIS SCHOOL.

WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT A RUDE WAITRESS!
GEEZ, HA HA HA...

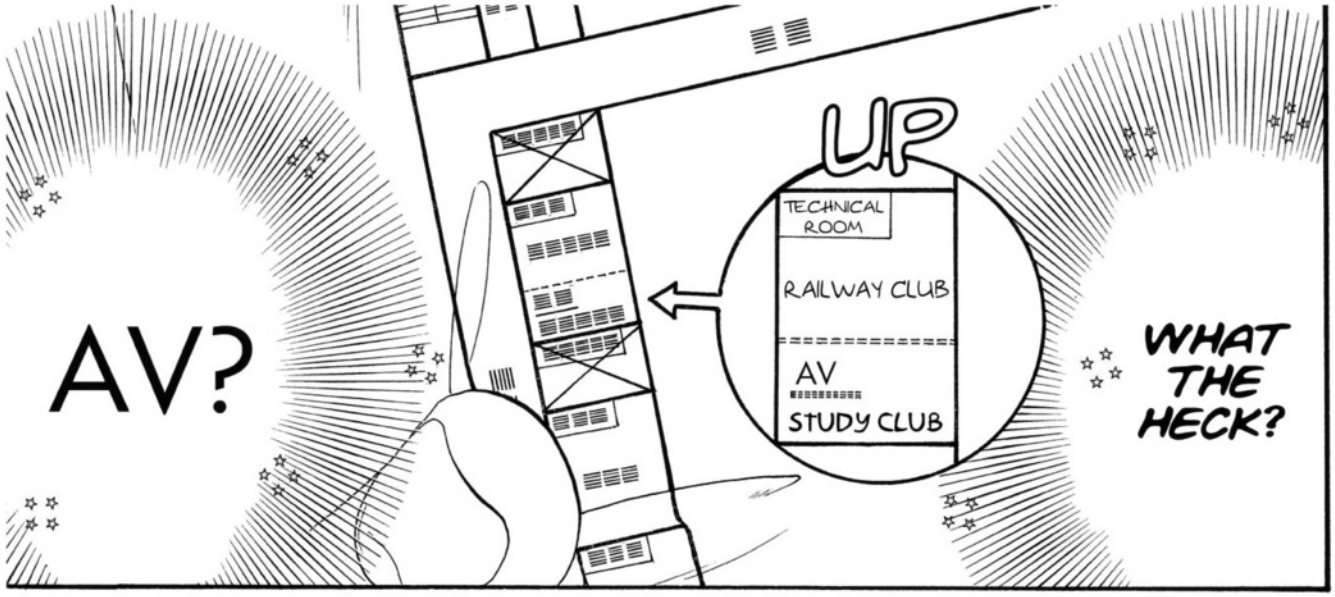
WE'RE GON-NA STAY ALL DAY.
WHADDAYA MEAN? WE'RE HERE TO HAVE FUN.
WHY DID YOU COME? HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO STAY?

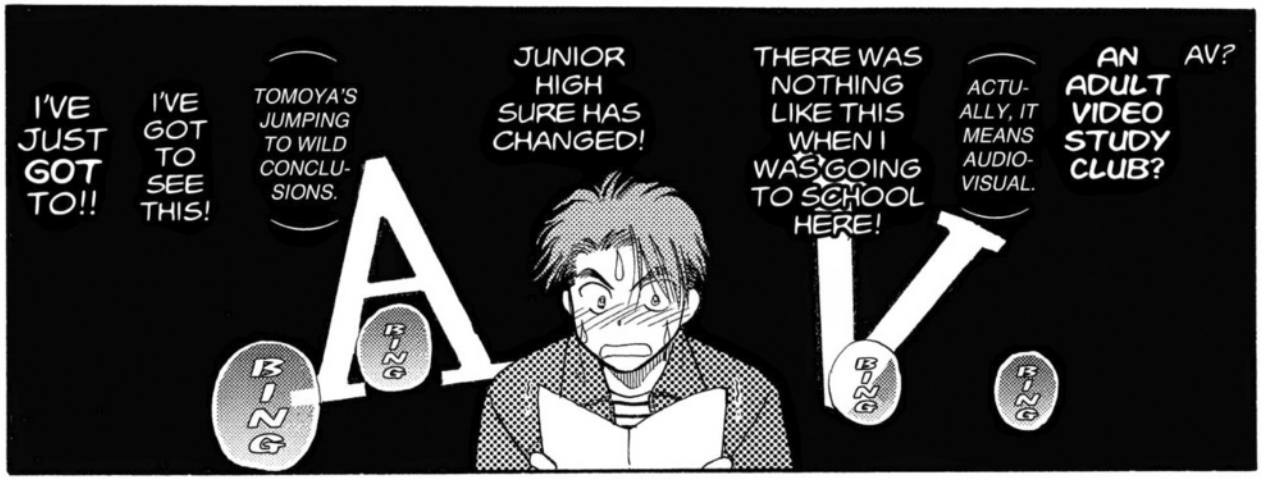
...
PLOP
PLIP

HERE...

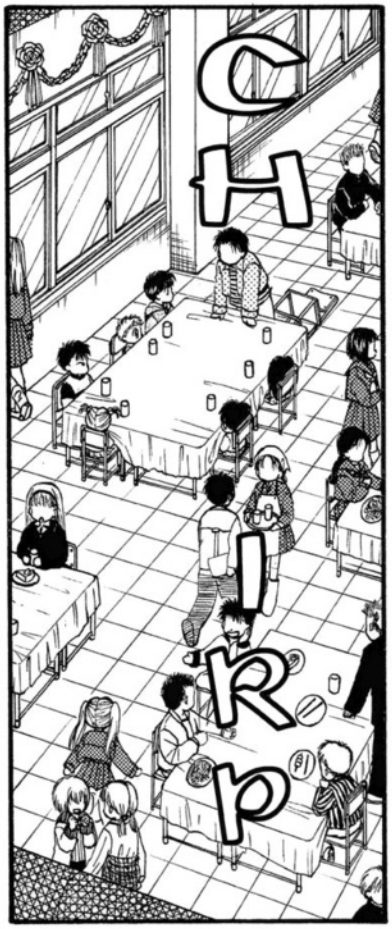
SPLOOSH
...YOU ARE!

ZANG
I... I...
I WILL HAVE FUN WITH SAKAMAKI...
ZANG
ZANG
IT'S UNREQUITED LOVE, BUT I'VE DECIDED TO INVITE HIM...
...AT MY LAST JUNIOR HIGH FESTIVAL!
...AND I'M...
ALL DAY ?!
YOU CAN'T !!
MAKES NO SENSE.
MA-BO, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT "WOMEN'S HEARTS ARE LIKE THE AUTUMN SKY"?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ASAKO?
ARE YOU OKAY, ASAKO?
WAAH WAAH
ZANG ZANG
! Wah!
WELL, SINCE WE'RE HERE, WE MIGHT AS WELL CHECK IT ALL OUT.
SUFF
SUFF
...BUT I ALREADY FORGOT WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE.
I WANTED TO SEE THIS GUY ASAKO LIKES...
WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE?


AV?
UP
TECHNICAL ROOM
RAILWAY CLUB
AV
STUDY CLUB
WHAT THE HECK?

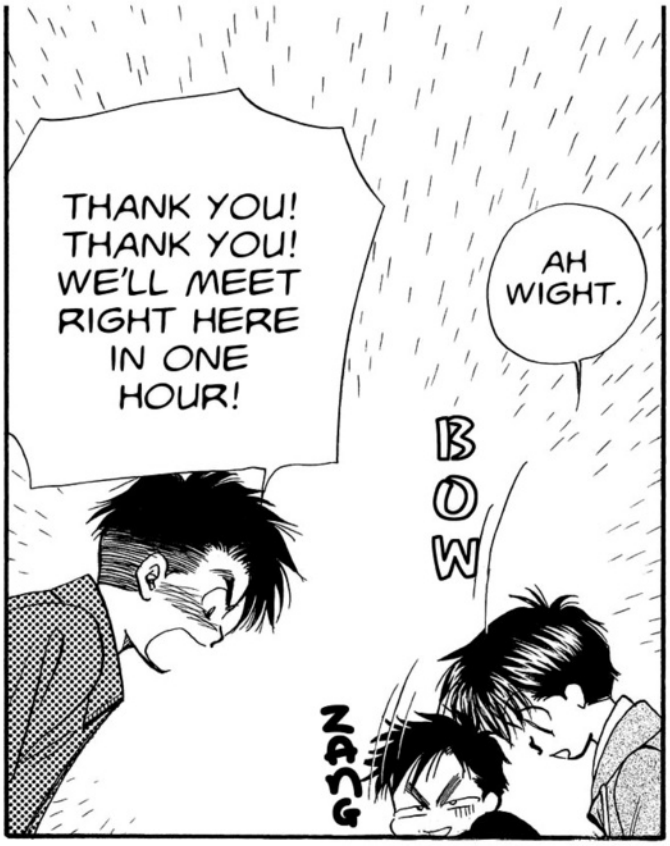

I'VE JUST GOT TO!!
I'VE GOT TO SEE THIS!
TOMOYA'S JUMPING TO WILD CONCLUSIONS.
A
BING
BING
JUNIOR HIGH SURE HAS CHANGED!
THERE WAS NOTHING LIKE THIS WHEN I WAS GOING TO SCHOOL HERE!
V
BING
ACTUALLY, IT MEANS AUDIO-VISUAL.
BING
AN ADULT VIDEO STUDY CLUB?
AV?

I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHING I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF.
BING
IT'S EMBARRASSING WHEN YOU SCREAM LIKE THAT!
WHAT?


CHIRP

OH, NO! I'M FEELING WEIRD!
ICHIKA!! MA-BO!!
WHUP

YOU, TAKUYA!
WHAT?
WIP
HUH?


THANK YOU! THANK YOU! WE'LL MEET RIGHT HERE IN ONE HOUR!
AH WIGHT.
BOW
NANG

WILL YOU WATCH MY LITTLE PIGLETS FOR ME?
SERI OUS

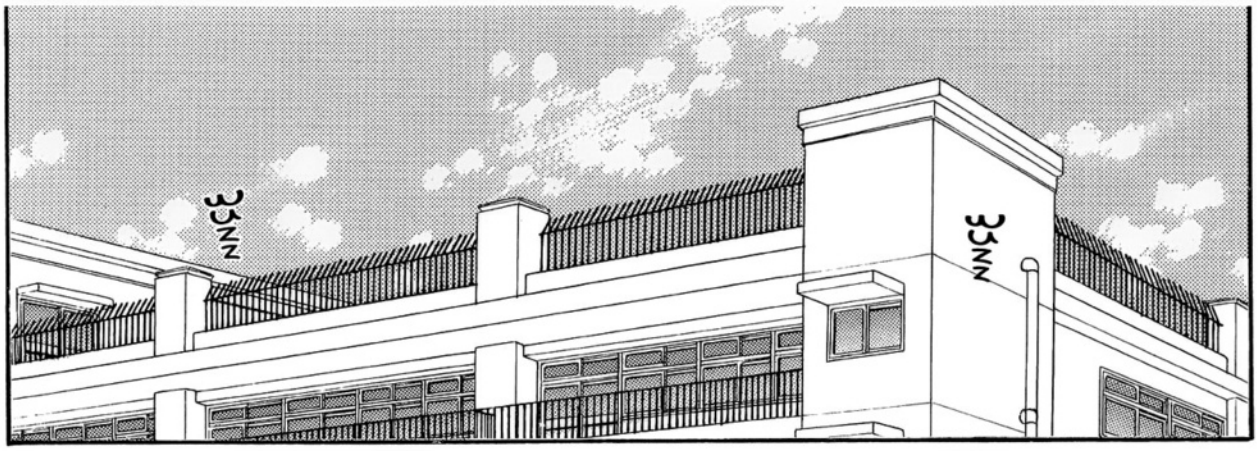
HUH?
WH-WHAT?
BRRR
BRRR

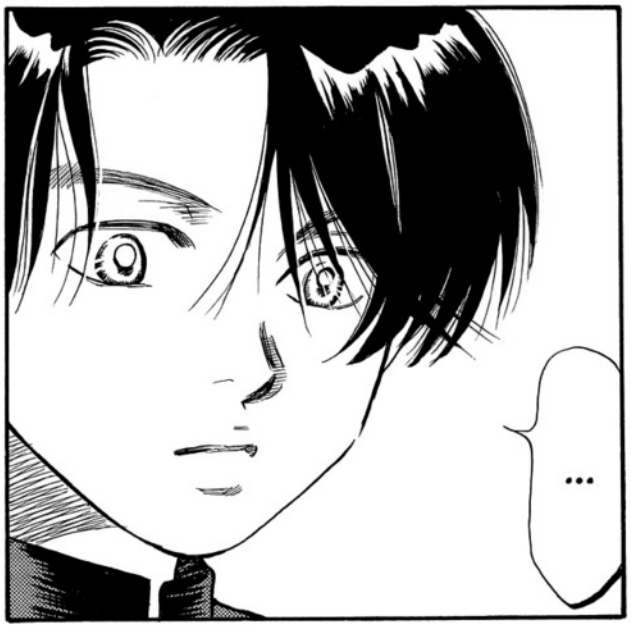
AAH!!
PITCHOOM

HUH? I WASN'T THINKING!
HE JUST MADE YOU HIS DESIGNATED BABY-SITTER!
TAKUYA! WHY ARE YOU TALKING LIKE MINORU?
HUH?
BRRR
BRRR
GLUB GLUB

WASN'T THAT TOMOYA? WHERE'S HE GOING IN SUCH A HURRY?
PICHING

OH, NO.
ARRGH
I HOPE HE'S NOT GONNA DO SOMETHING **WEIRD.**
ARRGH


ZZNN
ZZNN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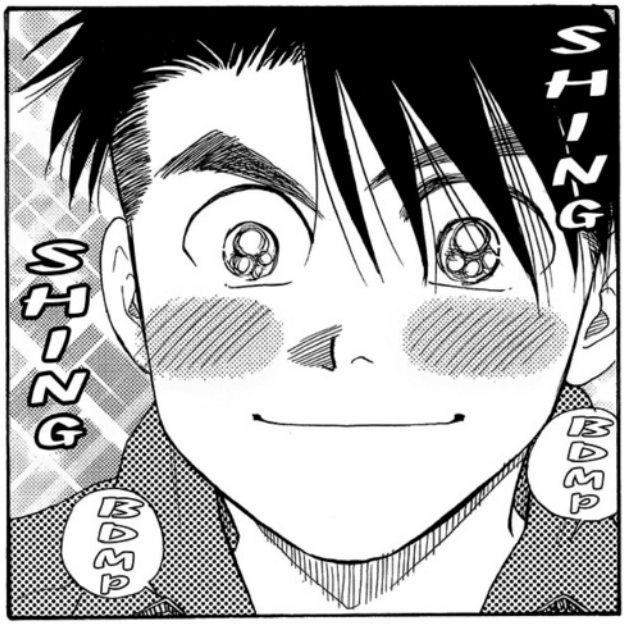
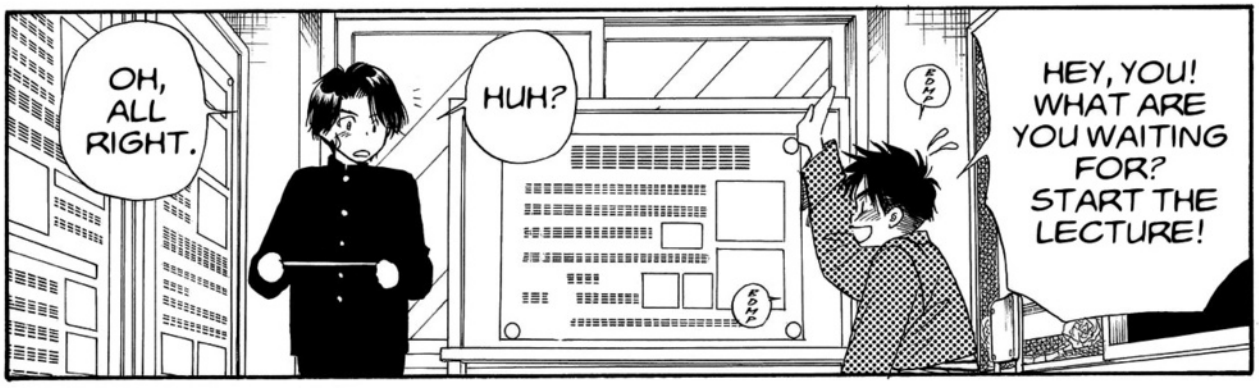

SHING
SHING
BDMP
BDMP


OH, ALL RIGHT.
HUH?
HEY, YOU! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? START THE LECTURE!
KONK
KONK

GULP
FUJII, MY LONGTIME IDOL, IS RIGHT IN FRONTOF ME!
...HOW TO TELL WHAT AUDIO EQUIPMENT HAS THE BEST SOUND QUALITY.

I KNOW THIS GUY!
THE SUBJECT OF THIS LECTURE IS...
BDMP
BDMP

NICE TO MEET YOU TOO!
I'M NOBUKAZU SAKAMAKI. I'LL BE DELIVERING THIS MORNING'S LECTURE. NICE TO MEET YOU.

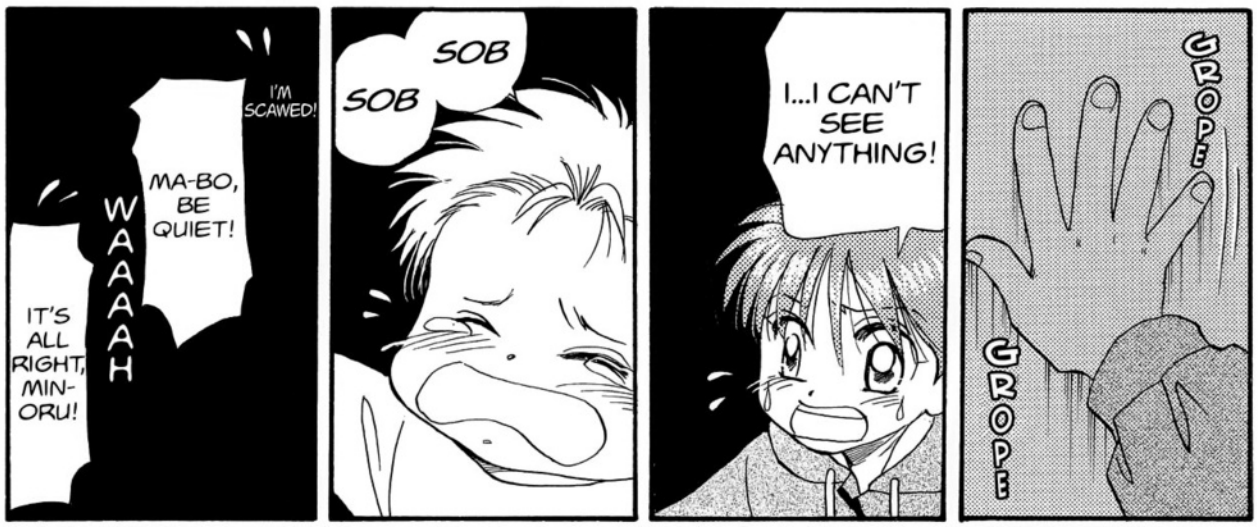
WHAT SHOULD WE DO? YOU WANT TO GO IN?
TAKUYA
SURE!
GON
HAUNTED HOUSE
COW
WOOO
CREEPCREEPCREEP

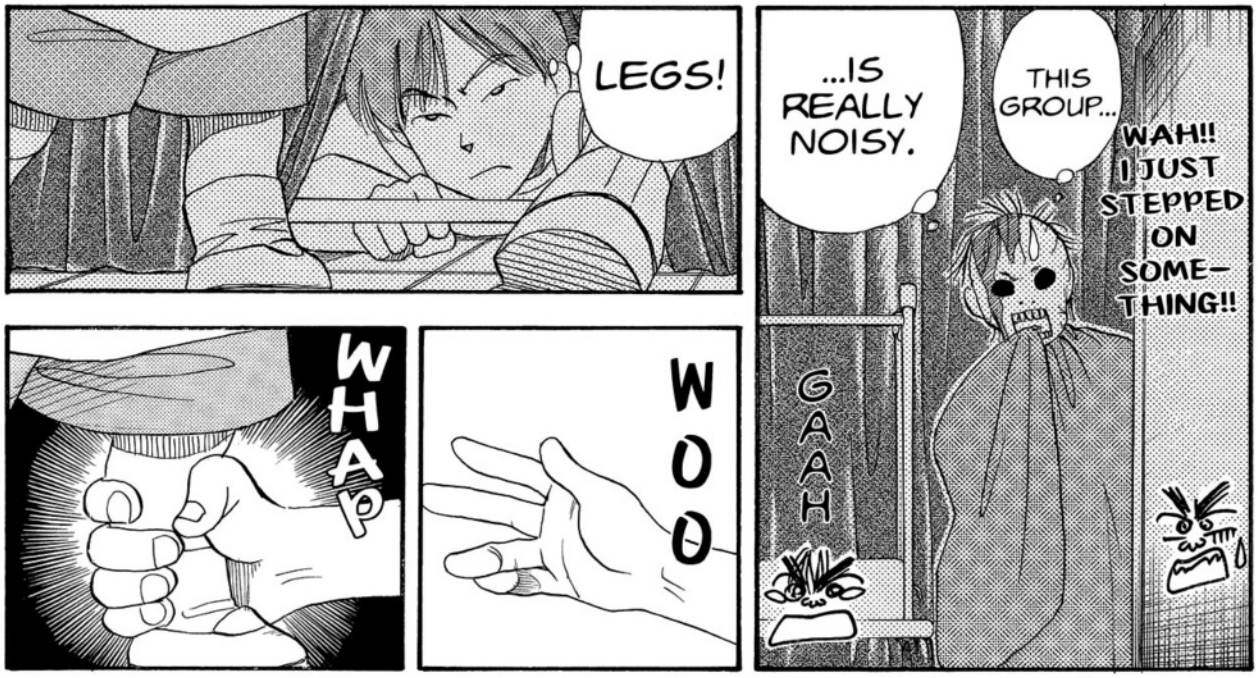
HAVE FUN! ♡
AAAH
CREEP CREEP CREEP

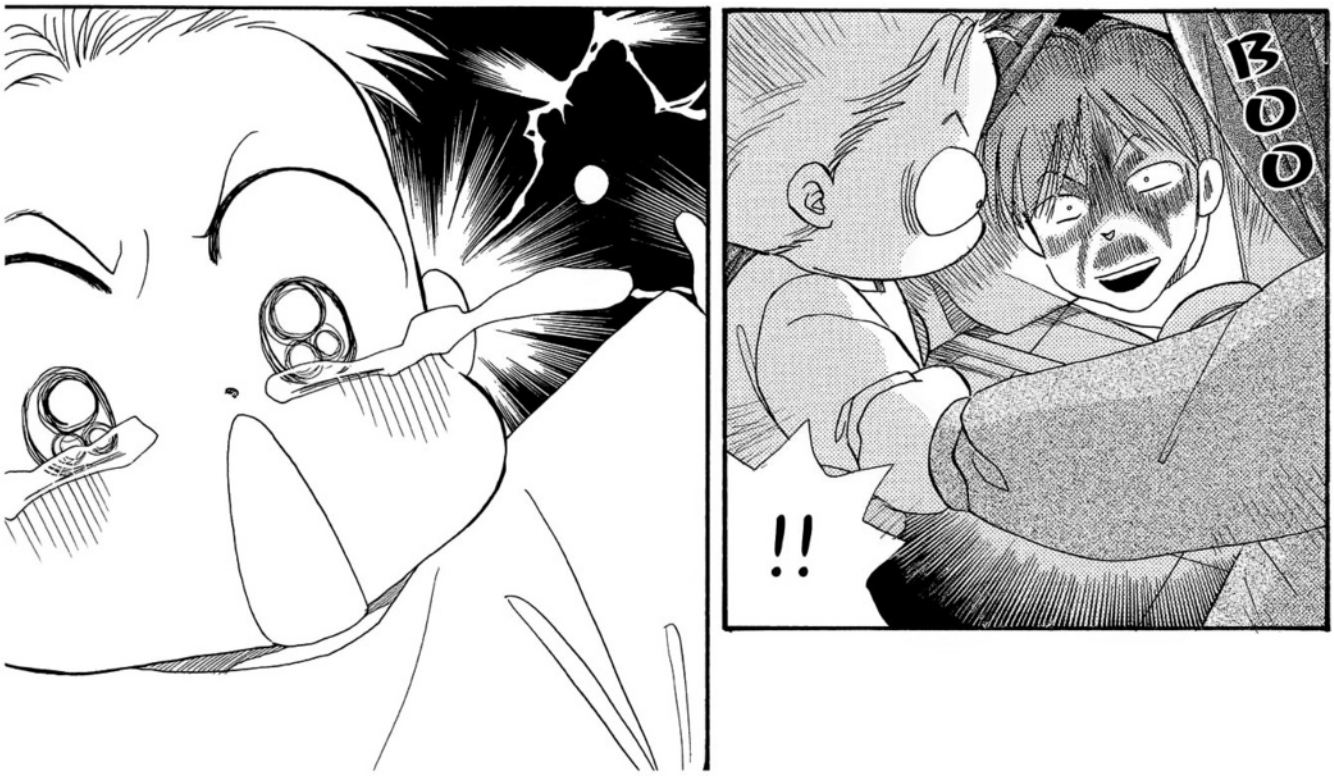
TAKUYA, YOU LEAD THE WAY. I'LL BRING UP THE REAR.
...
HEH HEH HEH ♡

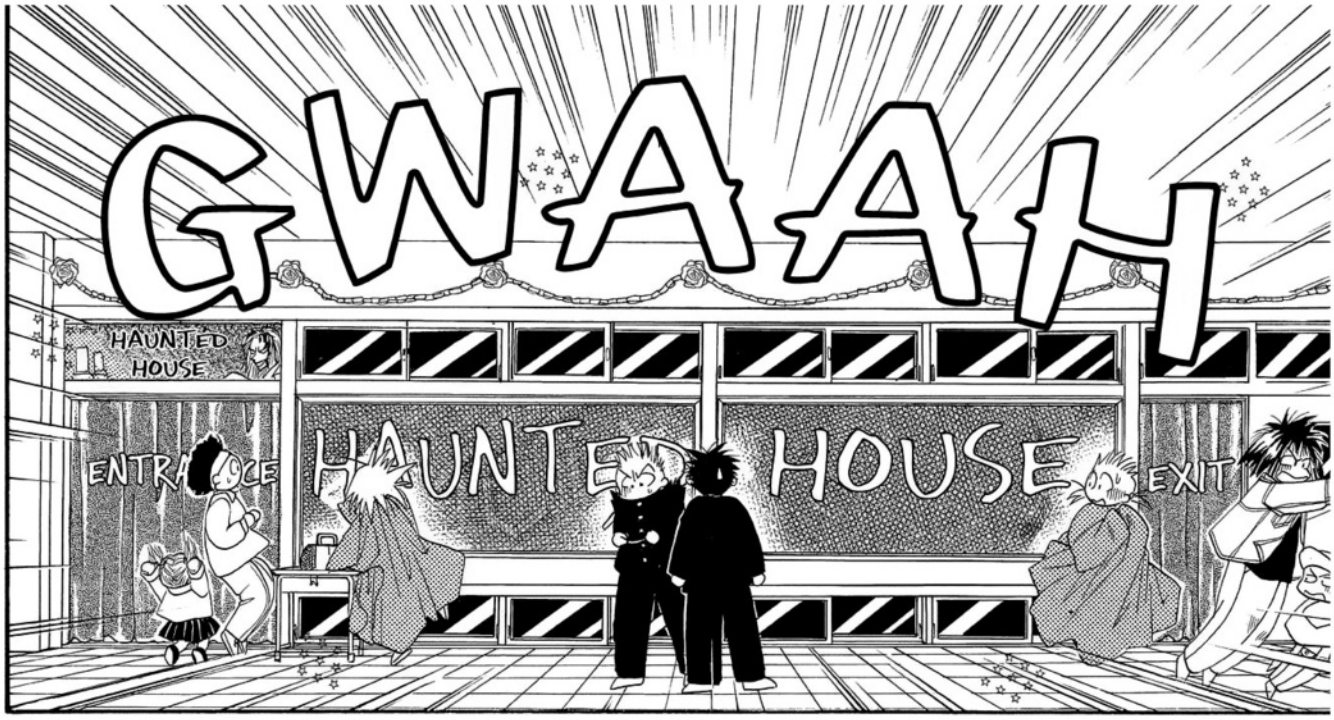
I'LL FOLLOW MINORU!
AH!
YHAP

NO, BWAZA! SCAWY GHOST!
IT'S DARK INSIDE, SO PLEASE HOLD THE LITTLE ONES' HANDS.
IT'LL BE FUN, MINORU.


GROPE
GROPE
I...I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING!
SOB
SOB
I'M SCAWED!
MA-BO, BE QUIET!
WAAAAH
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MIN-ORU!


LEGS!
...IS REALLY NOISY.
THIS GROUP...
WAH!! I JUST STEPPED ON SOME-THING!!
GAAH
WOO
WHAP


BOO
!!


GWAAH
HAUNTED HOUSE
ENTRANCE
HAUNTED HOUSE
EXIT

WHAp

WHAp

HIRO, GIVE ME YOUR HAND! WHERE IS IT?

MINORU! DON'T LET GO OF MY HAND!

IS THIS REALLY SCARY?
NO, NOT AT ALL.
MOST PEOPLE THINK IT'S BORING.

WHEW. HEY, YOU GUYS, IT'S OVER.

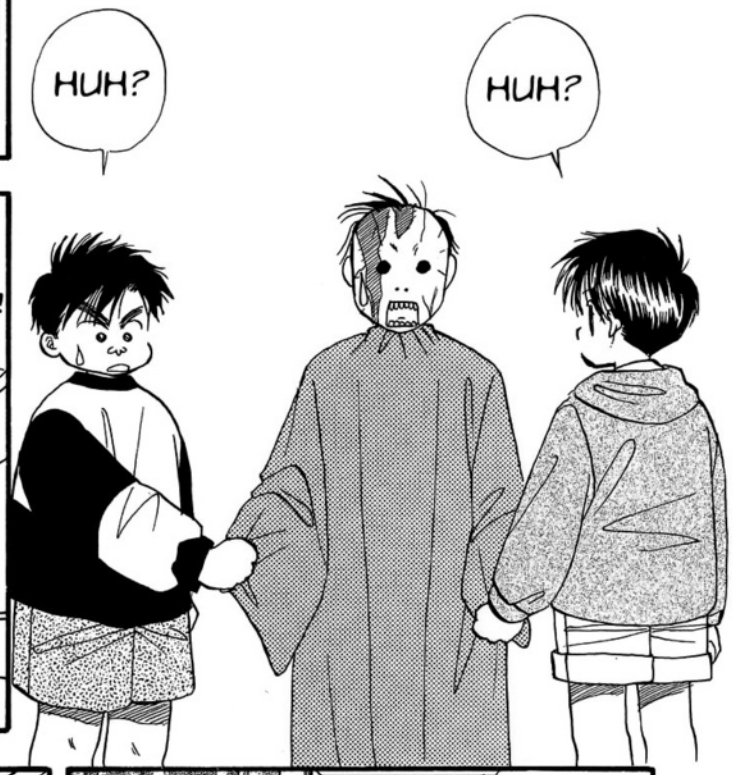
WHEW! IT WAS HARD TO BREATHE!

WELL, THAT'S IT. HERE'S THE EXIT!

WAAH!! BWAZA!!
DON'T CRY, MINORU!

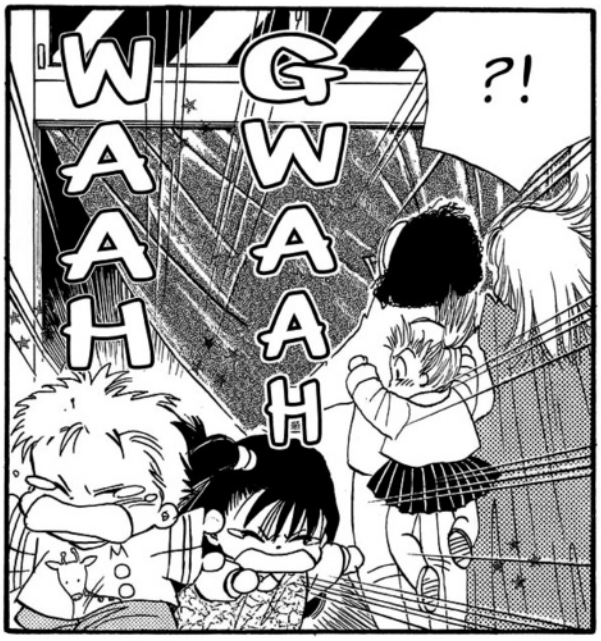
GWAAAH I DON'T LIKE THIS! IT'S TOO SCARY! WAAAH!!
...

HIRO! MA-BO! ICHIKA! MIN-ORU!
EXIT


HUH?
HUH?

WAAAH
TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP

OKAY, YOU CAN GO IN NOW. HAVE FUN!

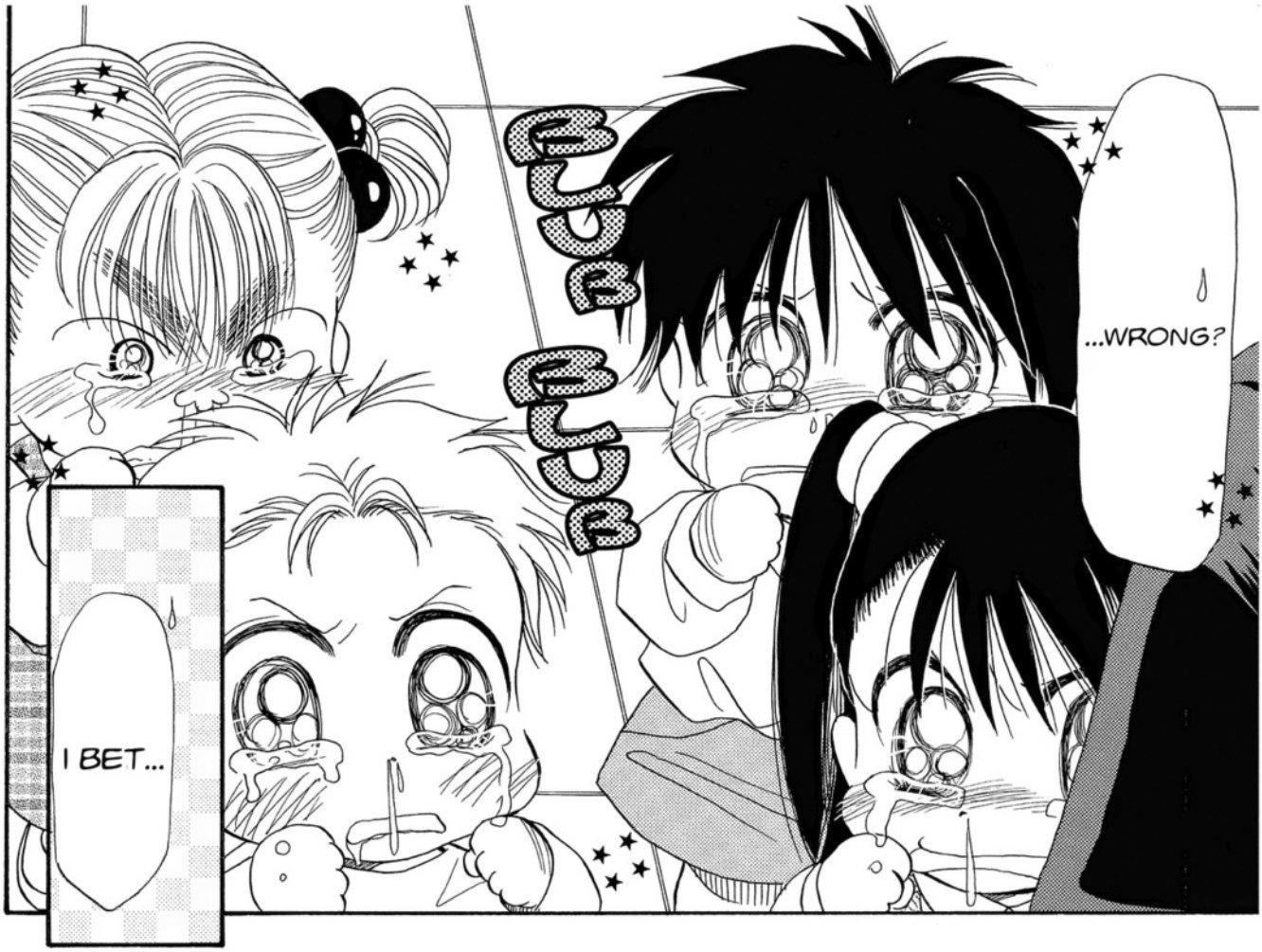

WAAAH
GWAAAH
?!

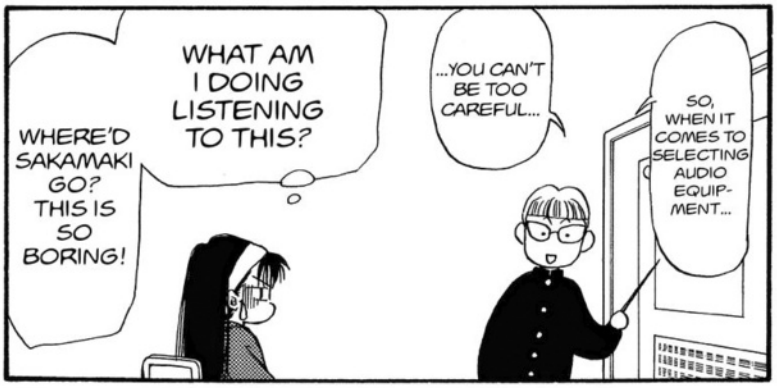
WHAT WAS THAT?
MOMMY, I'M SCARED! LET'S GO!

SO...
...THESE SYSTEMS ARE SAID...

NOPE.
NONE.
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ?
THAT'S ALL.
MACHINES WITH THE CHARACTERISTICS I MENTIONED...
...HAVE BETTER POTENTIAL FOR CREATING SUPERIOR SOUND.
STONE
...TO HAVE A LOW Q FACTOR.
IN OTHER WORDS, THEY'RE OF INFERIOR QUALITY.
I WAS IN SIXTH GRADE HERE WHEN YOU WERE IN EIGHTH.
HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
UM... ARE YOU INTERESTED IN AUDIO EQUIPMENT, FUJII?
WHAT WAS THAT?
HOW INCREDIBLY BORING.
HA HA
I SHOULD'VE KNOWN. IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN WHAT I THOUGHT.
TROMP
TROMP
BUZZ!
AV
ADULT VIDEO
DING
AV
AUDIO-VISUAL
?!
AV
AUDIO-VISUAL
I DON'T KNOW. I GUESS THIS STUFF'S OKAY.

AMAZING!
I TALKED TO FUJII!
Doesn't show much emotion
SAKA-MAKI!
SAKA-MAKI, IT'S MY TURN NEXT.
SAKA-MAKI?
BDMP
BDMP
ASAKO!
I'LL TAKE OVER FOR YOU.
OH? REALLY?
I CAN GO SEE SAKA-MAKI!
HEY, KIDS.
WHAT'S ...
THIS AREA'S NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
OH!
THESE CLASS-ROOMS ARE USED FOR STORAGE!
WAAAH
SOB SOB
BOO-HOO
BLUB
HUH?
SIGH ...





Chapter 92 / The End

Chapter 93
BABY & Me

KUMANOI JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL FESTIVAL
CAFETERIA
UDON NOODLES
SOBA NOODLES
RAMEN NOODLES
DELICIOUS!
MR. SAKAMAKI!
?

WE'RE NOT LOST!

YOU GUYS ARE LOST, RIGHT? I'D BETTER TAKE YOU TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BOOTH.

I'M HUNGRY!
I WANT UDON NOODLES!
YEAH.
DERE'S A CAFETEWIA!

AND TO BE STRONG, WE NEED PHYSICAL STAMINA, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT. SO WE HAVE TO BE STRONG.
YEAH.
EAT.
WIGHT!
NOD

YOU'RE NOT?
WE WERE CRYING BECAUSE WE GOT SCARED!
ACTUALLY, IT'S OUR BIG BROTHERS WHO ARE LOST.
BWAZA WOST?

OH?
FOUR BOWLS, PLEASE.
FOUR BOWLS?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?

BUT WHY DO I HAVE TO FEED YOU GUYS?
HUH?
IT'S BEST TO "MAKE HASTE SLOWLY," RIGHT?
MAKES NO SENSE.
MAKES EVEN LESS SENSE.
DEY SAY: "OUR NEIGHBOR'S VISITOR EATS LOTS OF PERSIMMONS," WIGHT?

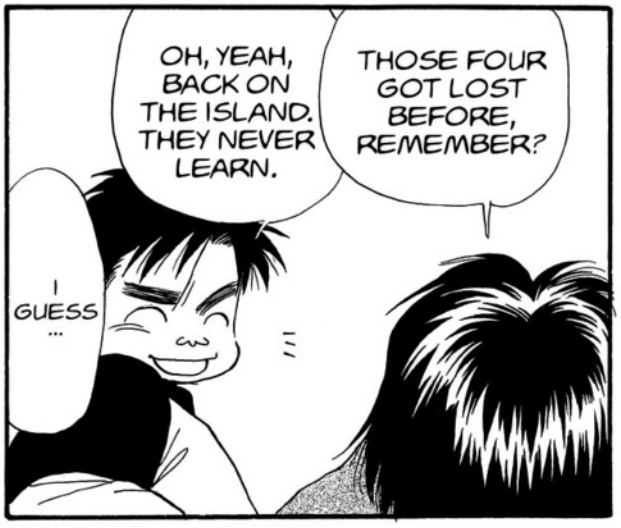
GON...
REST ROOMS
TEA CER-EMONY
EAT UP.
GLOOM
GRRR
I WANT MORE.
NOT MUCH

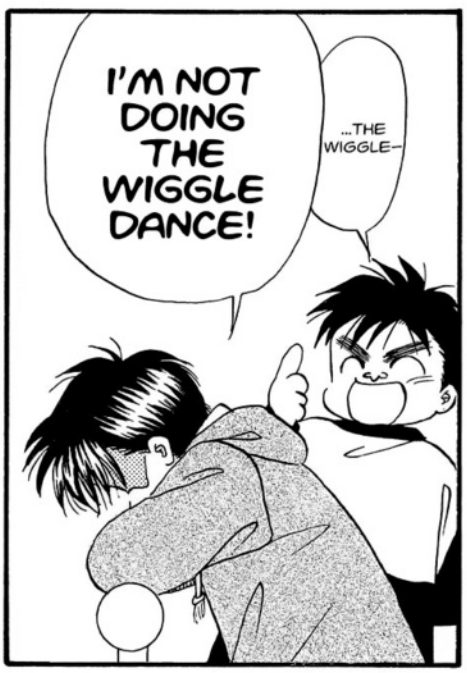
UM... TAKUYA?
HE'S REALLY DOWN.
GLOOM

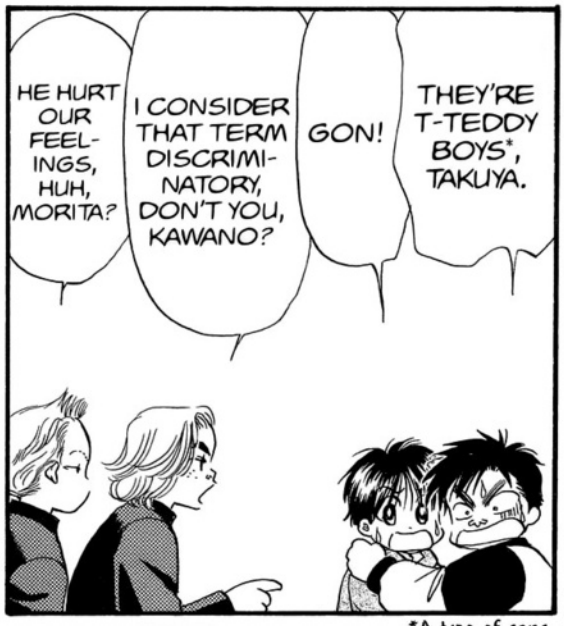
...I DON'T DESERVE TO BE A BIG BROTHER.
ZANG

YEAH?
WHERE COULD THE LITTLE ONES BE?
BEATS ME.
I'M TIRED.
HMPH
ME TOO.

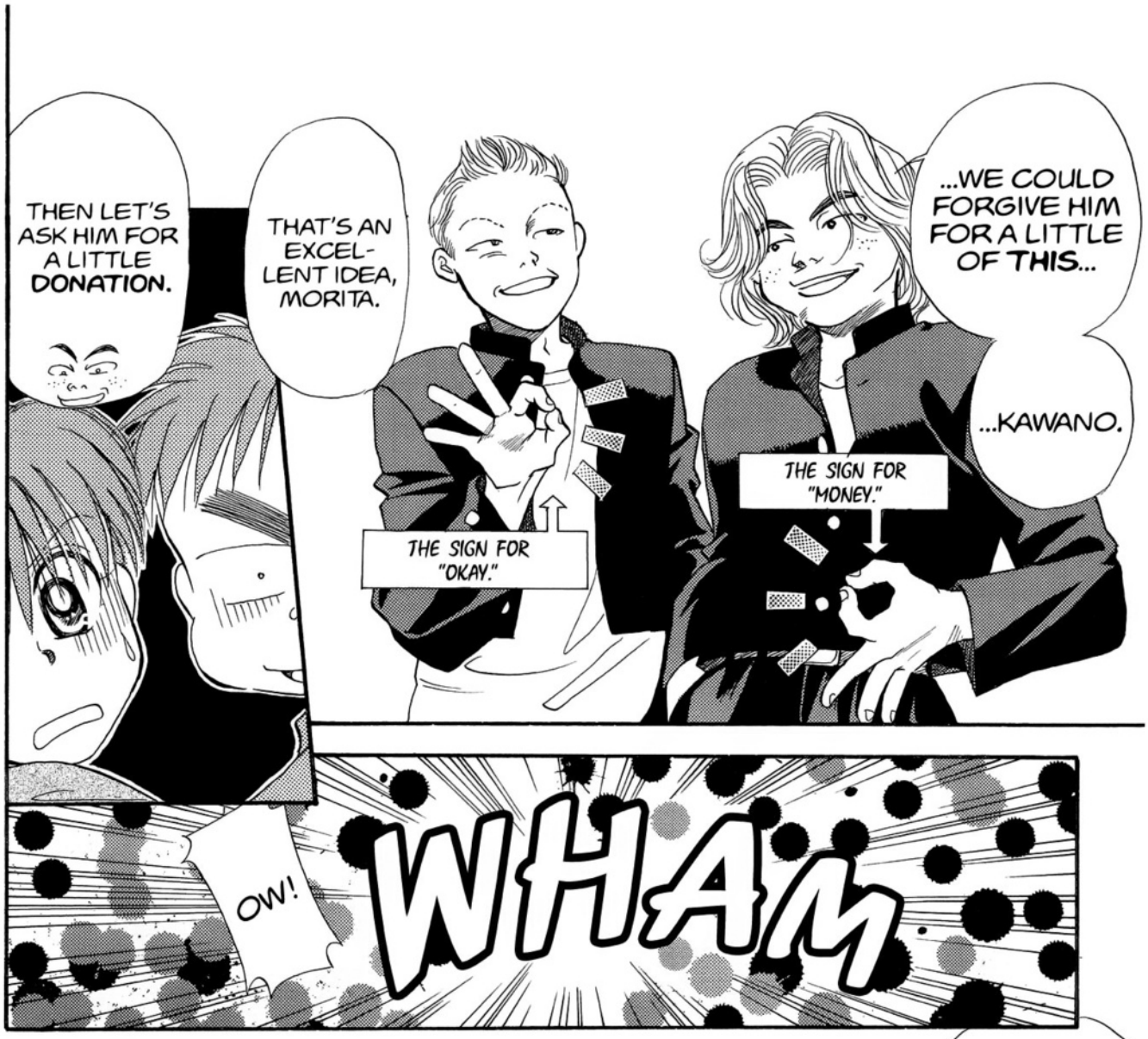
TAKUYA! YOU'RE TOO HARD ON YOUR-SELF!
AT TIMES LIKE THIS, YOU HAVE TO STAY POSITIVE. MAYBE YOU SHOULD DO...
BDMP
BDMP


THOSE FOUR GOT LOST BEFORE, REMEMBER?
OH, YEAH, BACK ON THE ISLAND. THEY NEVER LEARN.
I GUESS...

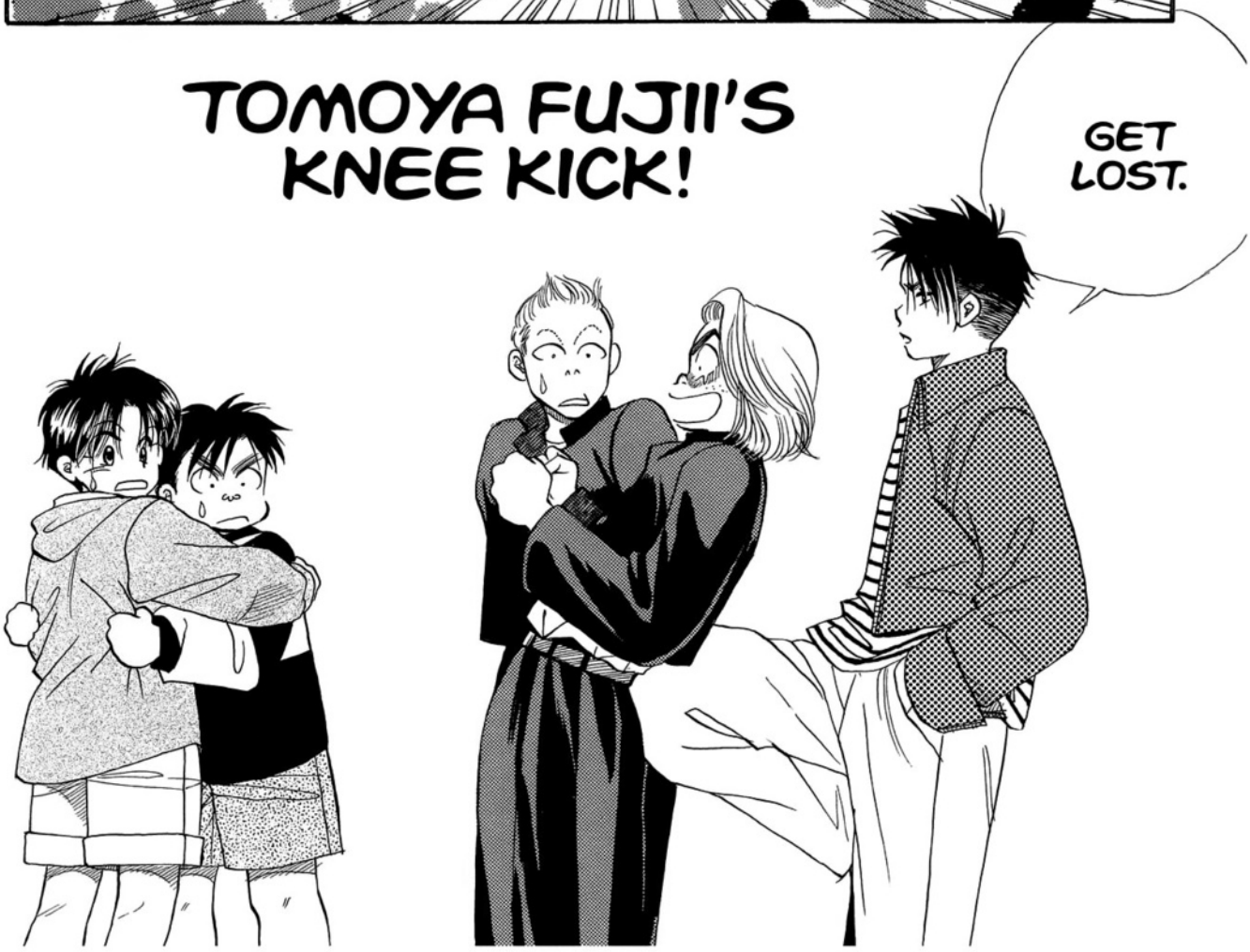




*A type of gang.

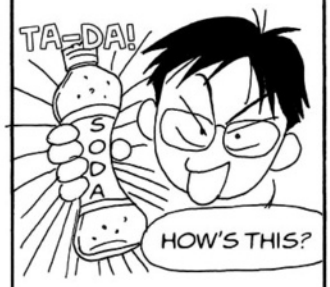


TOMOYA FUJII'S KNEE KICK!



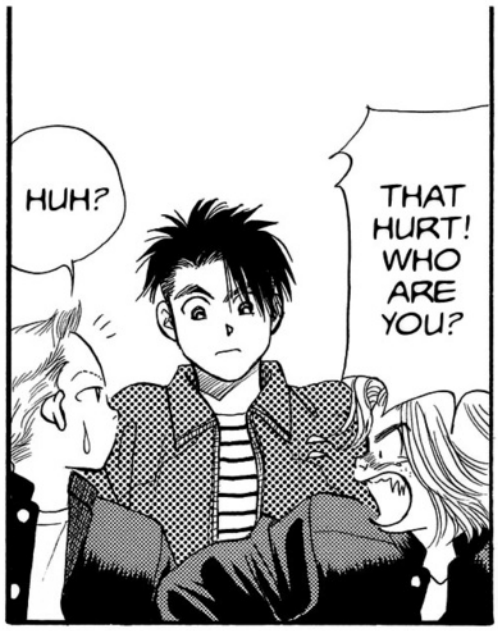
Author's Note Part 2

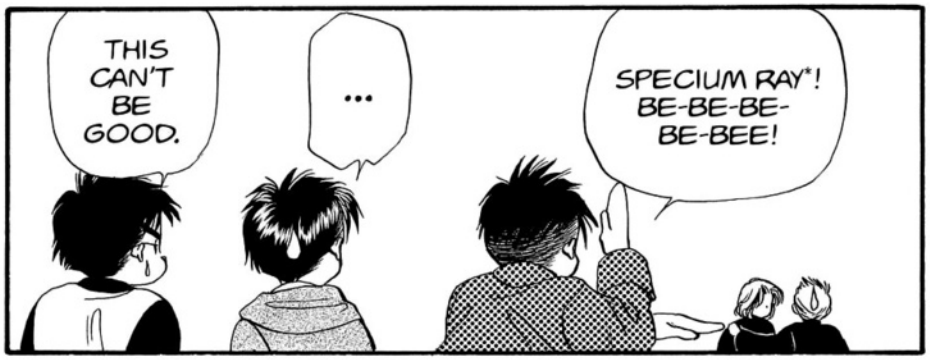
This column is always hard for me because I can never think of anything good to write about. One day, my brother wanted to drink a soda I had in the refrigerator, and I was furious. He said, "Be nice and let me have half of it." I said, "No. I don't feel like drinking it right now and the fizz will be gone if you drink half of it." He frowned for awhile and drank half my soda anyway. And here was his solution to the problem.



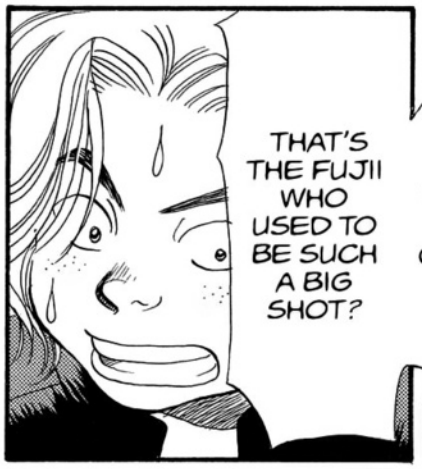
He squeezed all the air out of the soda bottle and screwed the top back on. (The soda still wasn't carbonated enough when I had it later.) I thought the episode was funny, so I wrote it down to use in one of these columns.

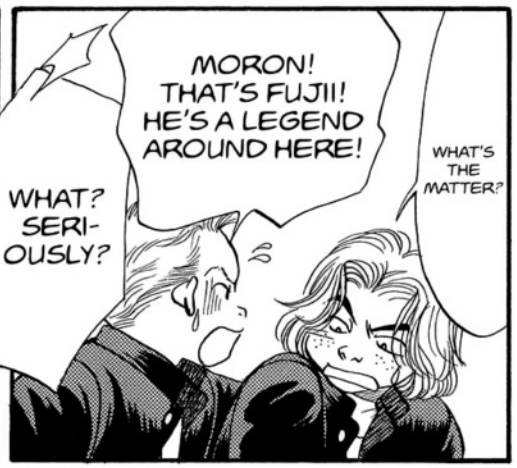
Continued in Part 3



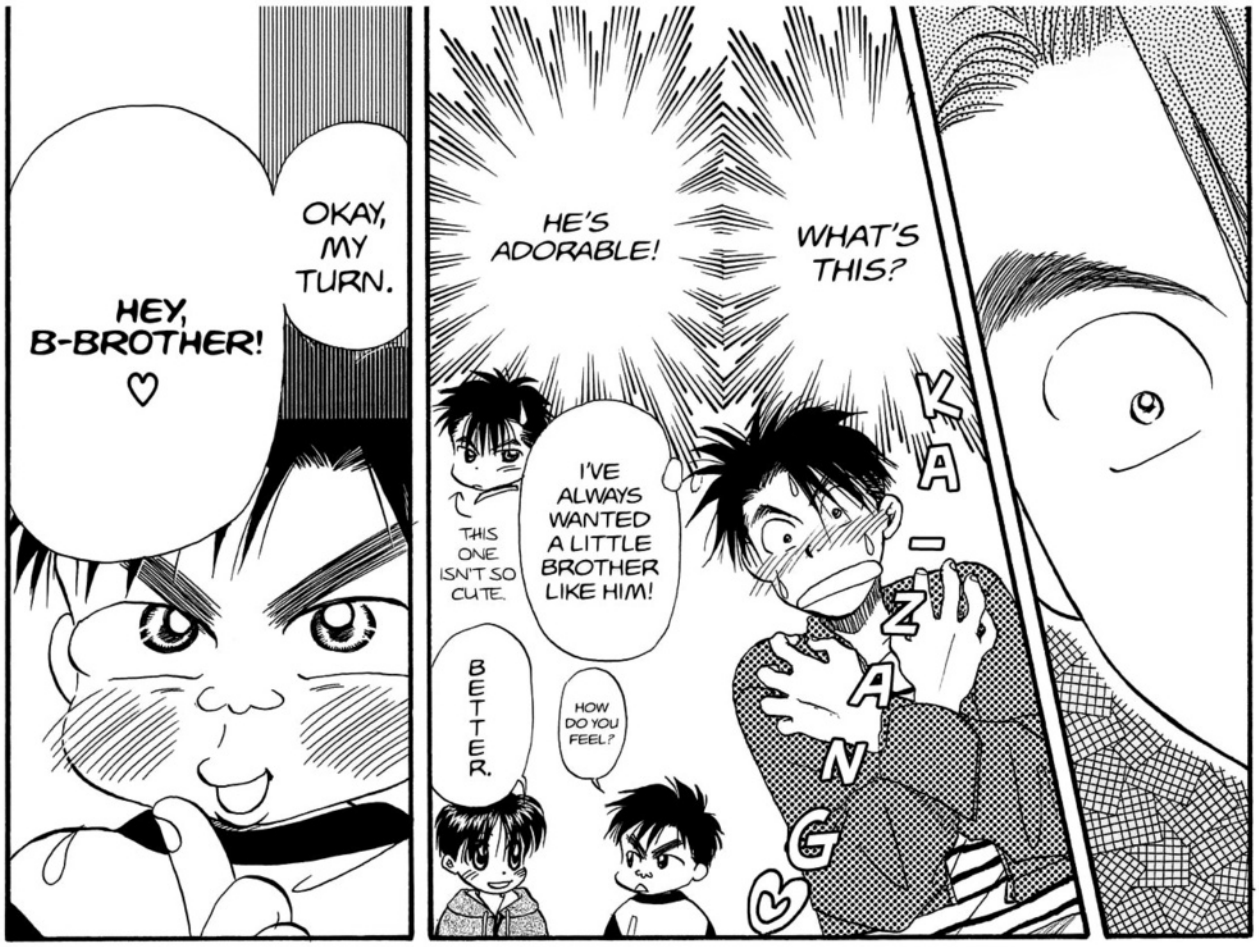


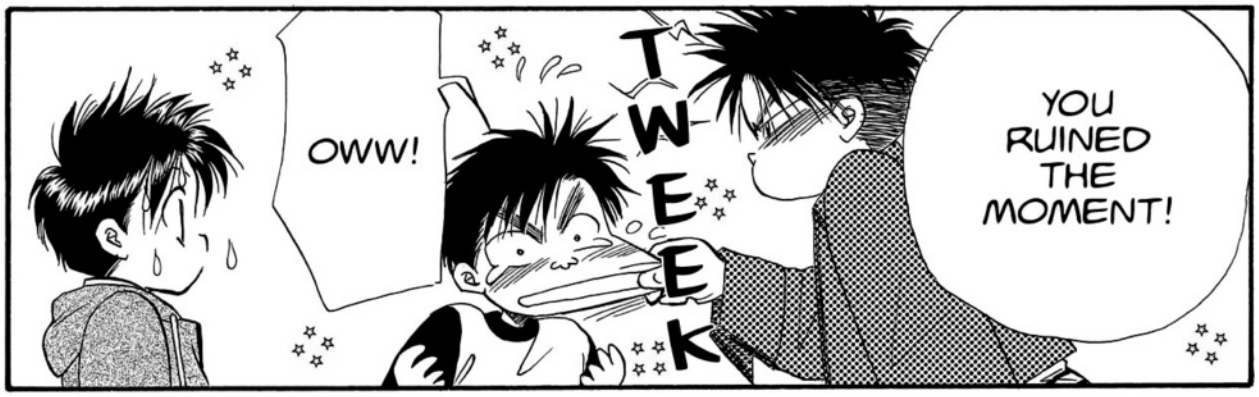
*Ultraman's famous attack.

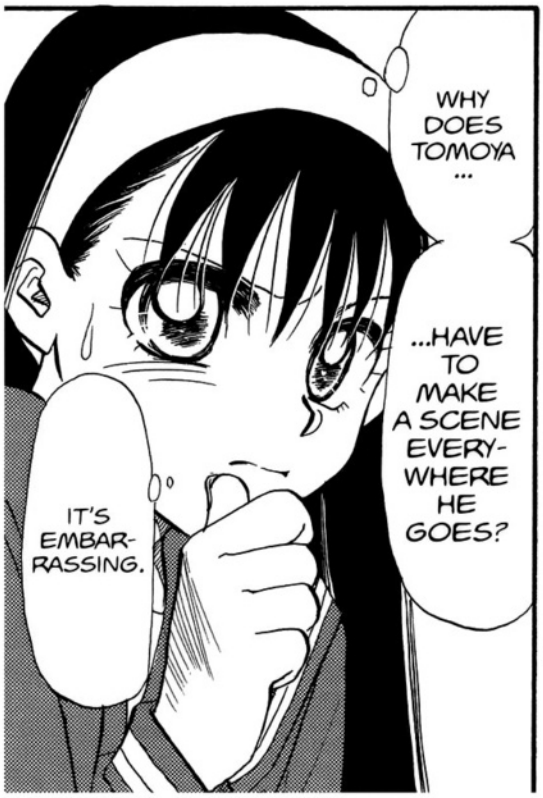




HOW LAME.
TOO BAD THEY GAVE UP SO EASILY, HUH?
TOMOYA IS SO COOL!
YOU THINK SO?
SNORT
BIG BROTHERS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DEPEND-ABLE.
HE REALLY THINKS HE'S GREAT.
I'M NOT DEPENDABLE AT ALL.
THAT'S RIGHT.
HEH
YOU CAN CALL ME "BROTHER" IF YOU WANT.
WHAT?
GO AHEAD. PLEASE.
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A BIG BRO-THER.
OKAY.
HEY...
...BRO-THER.

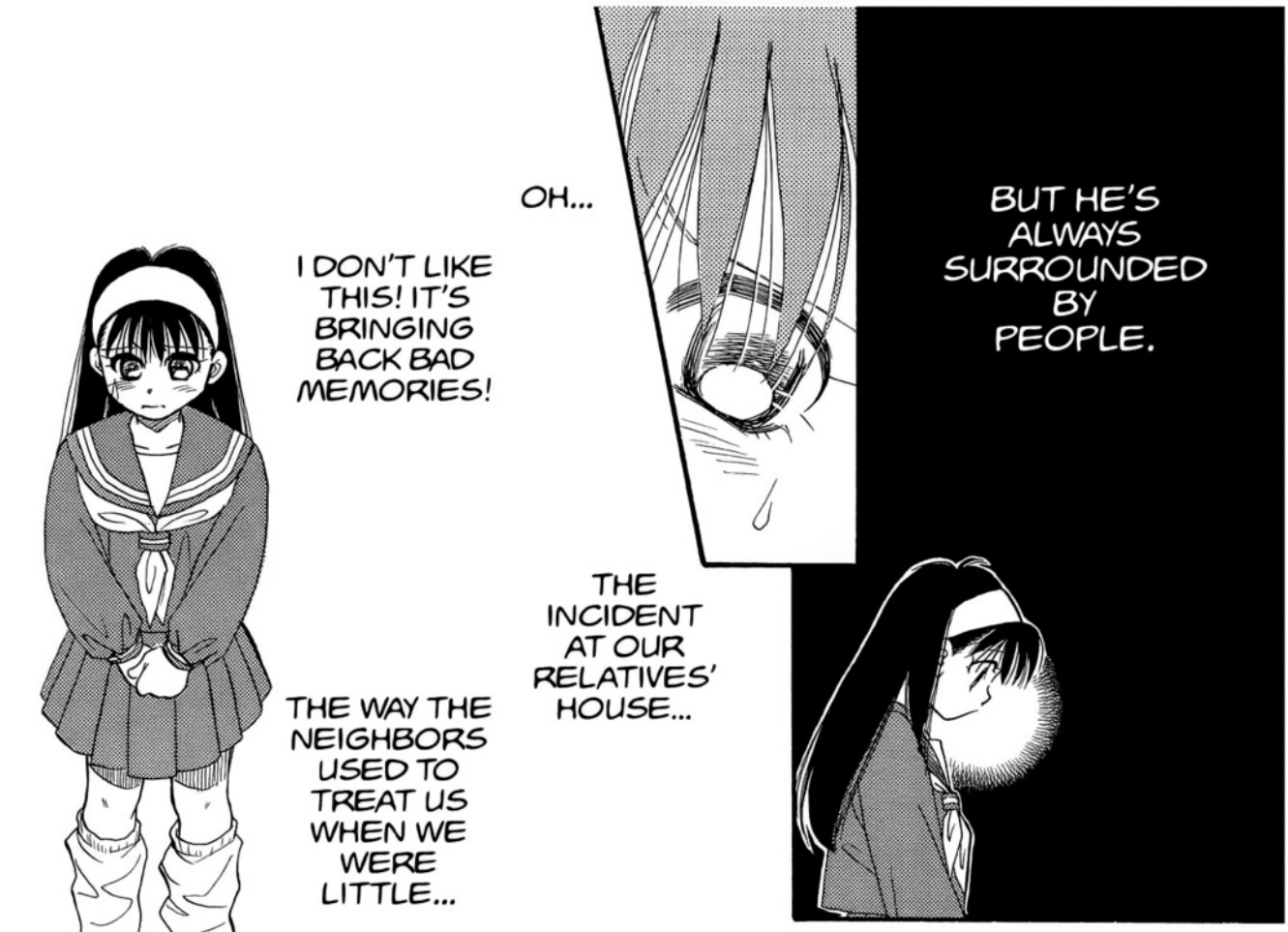

HEY, B-BROTHER! ♡
OKAY, MY TURN.
HE'S ADORABLE!
WHAT'S THIS?
KA-ZANG
THIS ONE ISN'T SO CUTE.
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A LITTLE BROTHER LIKE HIM!
BETTER.
HOW DO YOU FEEL?

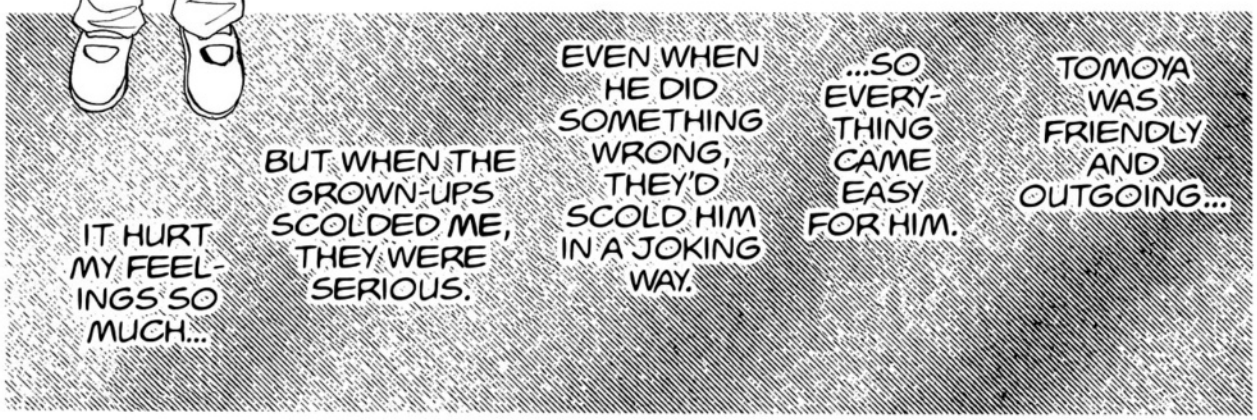

OWW!
TWEEK
YOU RUINED THE MOMENT!


WHY DOES TOMOYA ...
...HAVE TO MAKE A SCENE EVERY-WHERE HE GOES?
IT'S EMBAR-RASSING.

THAT WAS CLOSE. I ALMOST RAN INTO TOMOYA.
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
MORNING SHOW: 10:00 – 12:00 DRAMA
AFTERNOON SHOW: 1:00 – 2:00 CLUB
TUP
TUP

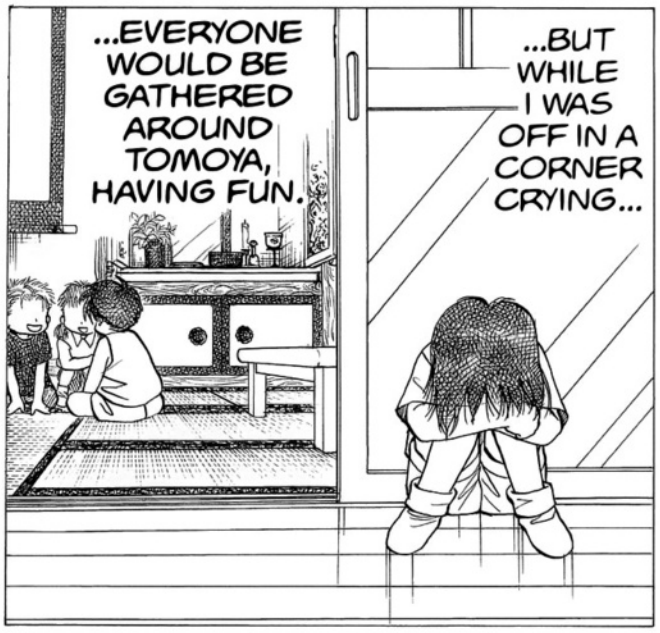
YACK
YACK
...

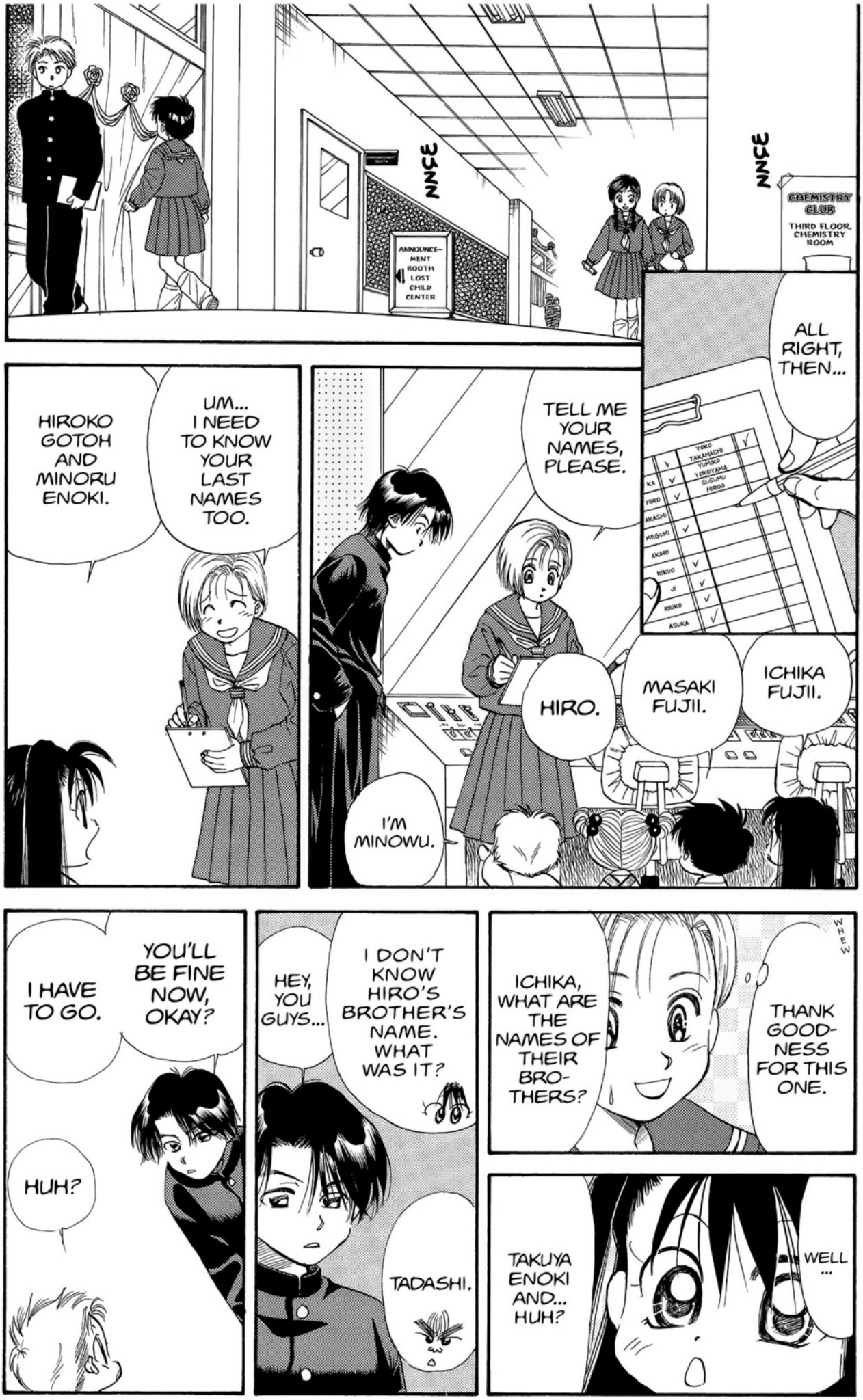

OH...
BUT HE'S ALWAYS SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE.
I DON'T LIKE THIS! IT'S BRINGING BACK BAD MEMORIES!
THE INCIDENT AT OUR RELATIVES' HOUSE...
THE WAY THE NEIGHBORS USED TO TREAT US WHEN WE WERE LITTLE...


IT HURT MY FEELINGS SO MUCH...
BUT WHEN THE GROWN-UPS SCOLDED ME, THEY WERE SERIOUS.
EVEN WHEN HE DID SOMETHING WRONG, THEY'D SCOLD HIM IN A JOKING WAY.
...SO EVERYTHING CAME EASY FOR HIM.
TOMOYA WAS FRIENDLY AND OUTGOING...

HMPH! THIS IS SILLY. WHO CARES ABOUT THAT STUFF?
I HAVE TO GO LOOK FOR SAKAMAKI!
TUP TUP TUP

...

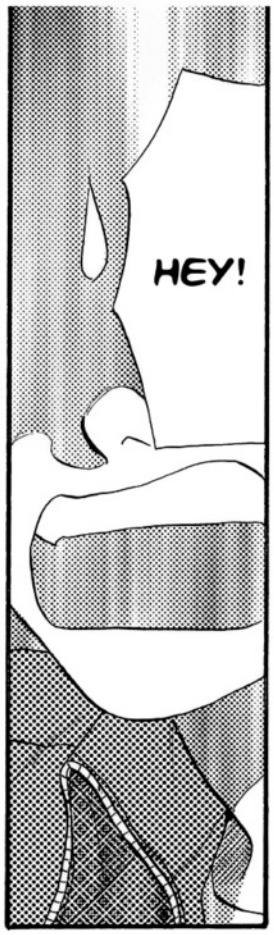

...EVERYONE WOULD BE GATHERED AROUND TOMOYA, HAVING FUN.
...BUT WHILE I WAS OFF IN A CORNER CRYING...


ANNOUNCEMENT BOOTH
ANNOUNCE-MENT BOOTH LOST CHILD CENTER
CHEMISTRY CLUB
THIRD FLOOR, CHEMISTRY ROOM
ALL RIGHT, THEN...
TELL ME YOUR NAMES, PLEASE.
HIROKO GOTOH AND MINORU ENOKI.
UM... I NEED TO KNOW YOUR LAST NAMES TOO.
HIRO.
MASAKI FUJII.
ICHIKA FUJII.
I'M MINOWU.
I HAVE TO GO.
YOU'LL BE FINE NOW, OKAY?
HUH?
HEY, YOU GUYS...
I DON'T KNOW HIRO'S BROTHER'S NAME. WHAT WAS IT?
TADASHI.
ICHIKA, WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THEIR BRO-THERS?
WHEW
THANK GOOD-NESS FOR THIS ONE.
TAKUYA ENOKI AND... HUH?
WELL ...

...GO BYE-BYE?
YOU...
Y-YEAH.
N-NO
I FEEL A LITTLE GUILTY.
PLUP
PLUP
...
!
SOCCER MATCH IN THE SCHOOL-YARD
BDMP
BDMP
THERE HE IS!
TMP
TMP
I FEEL LIKE I'M...
...ABAN-DONING A BUNCH OF PUP-PIES!
?!
TUP TUP TUP
UM...
EXCUSE ME, SAKAMAKI.

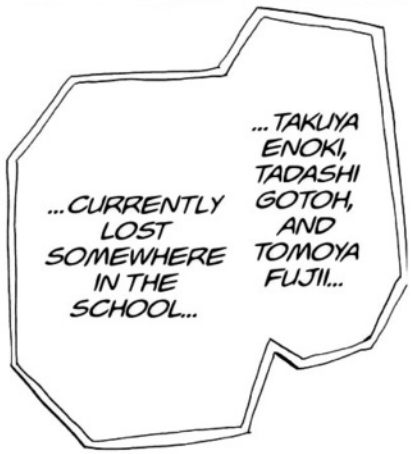
*In Japan, girls give chocolates to boys on Valentine's Day, and boys reciprocate on White Day, March 14.

WE'RE NOT THE ONES WHO ARE LOST!
IT HAD TO BE ICHIKA'S IDEA. SHE CAN'T STAND FAILURE.
WHERE'S THE ANNOUNCEMENT BOOTH?


HEY!

KLANG KLANG
WE HAVE A REPORT OF SOME LOST CHILDREN...
"THEY'D MAKE FUN OF US."
"I DON'T WANT TO."

!
DID YOU HEAR...
...THAT ANNOUNCEMENT?


...CURRENTLY LOST SOMEWHERE IN THE SCHOOL...
...TAKUYA ENOKI, TADASHI GOTOH, AND TOMOYA FUJII...

...ONE OF THOSE LOST KIDS WAS TOMOYA FUJII'S BROTHER OR SISTER!

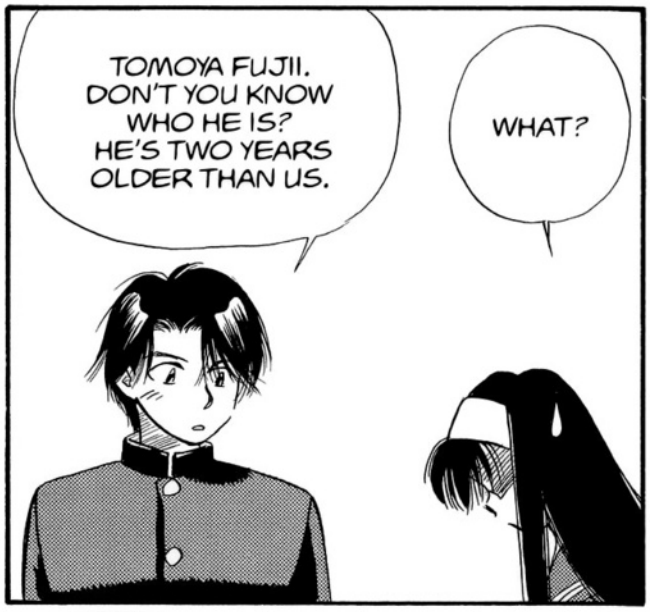
I TOOK THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS THEY MENTIONED TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BOOTH.
HUH?
BUT...

YOUR LITTLE BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE LOOKING FOR YOU.
PLEASE COME TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT BOOTH.

WE'LL REPEAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

WEIRD? TOMOYA FUJII?
UM...THAT WEIRD GUY? I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM.

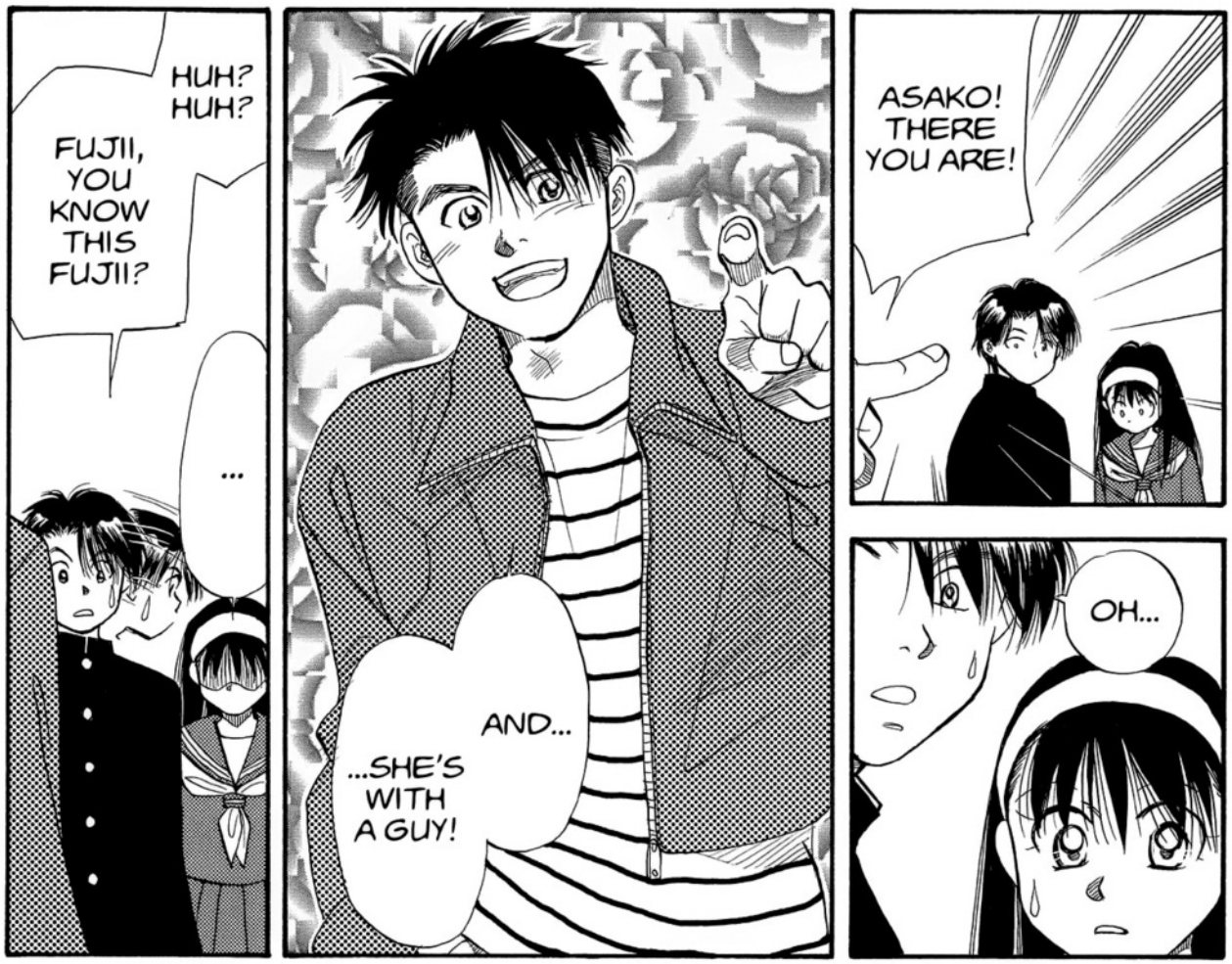
YOU HAVE THE SAME LAST NAME, HUH?
HE'S HARD TO FORGET.
BDMP

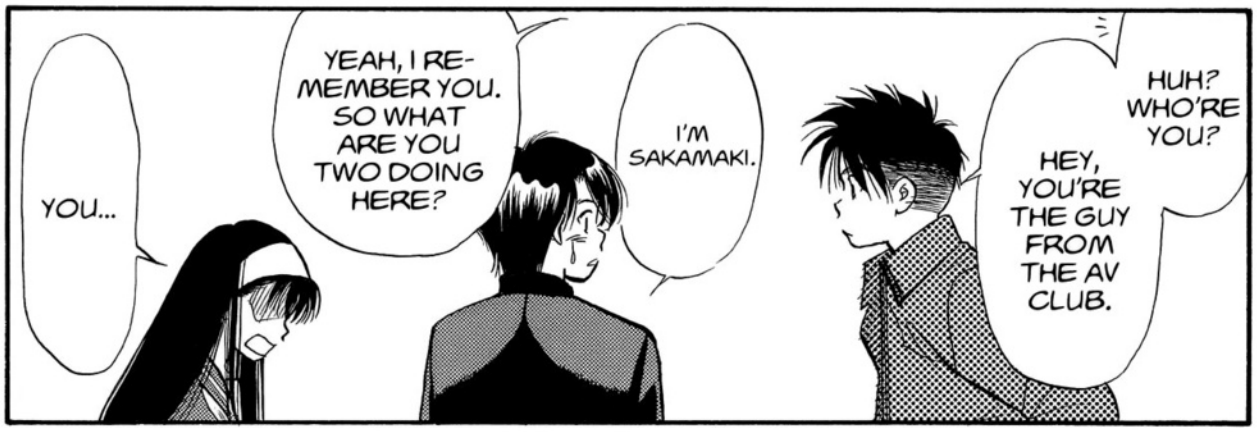

TOMOYA FUJII. DON'T YOU KNOW WHO HE IS? HE'S TWO YEARS OLDER THAN US.
WHAT?

DON'T CALL HIM WEIRD.
...
HE'S MY HERO.

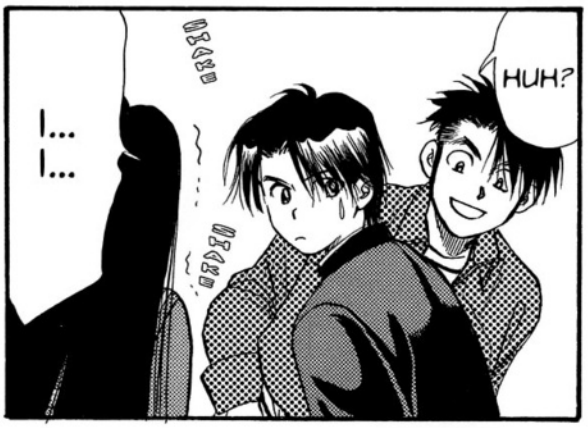
?!
DID HE JUST TELL ME OFF?

THINGS ARE GOING IN THE WRONG DIREC-TION.
WHAT?


HUH? HUH?
FUJII, YOU KNOW THIS FUJII?
...
AND...
...SHE'S WITH A GUY!
ASAKO! THERE YOU ARE!
OH...


YOU...
YEAH, I REMEMBER YOU. SO WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING HERE?
I'M SAKAMAKI.
HEY, YOU'RE THE GUY FROM THE AV CLUB.
HUH? WHO'RE YOU?

GLARE

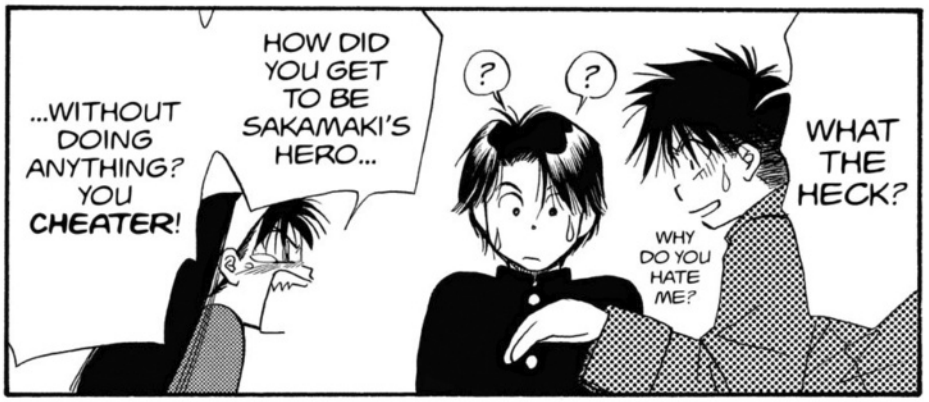

HUH?
I... I...

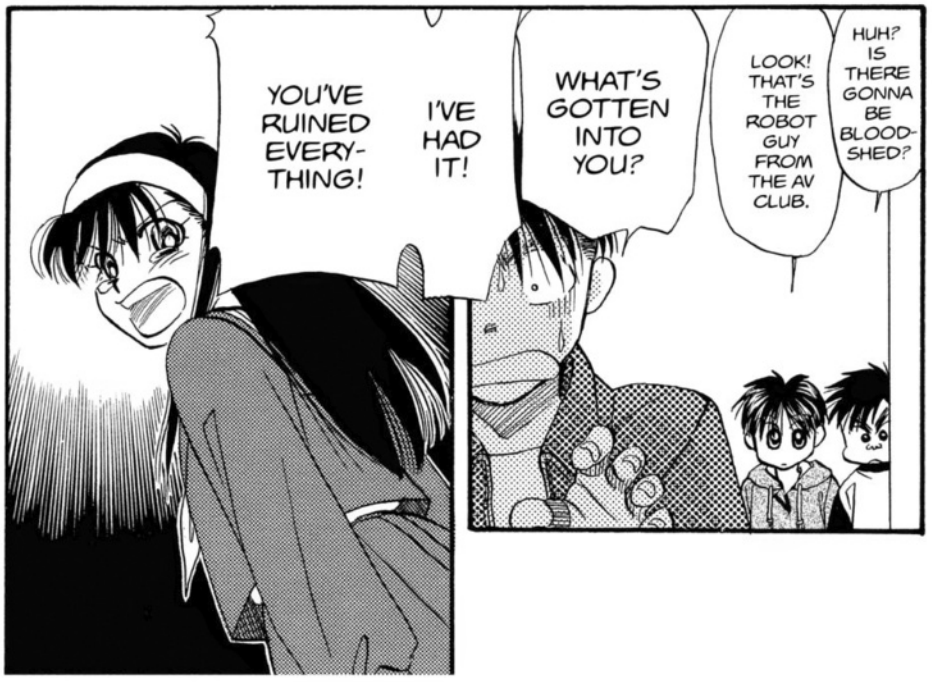
Author's Note Part 3

Continued from Part 2

To remind myself of the incident, I jotted down "carbonated," *tan-san* in Japanese, on a memo pad. But that created a problem. I have a habit of writing down everything sloppily, including important phone calls and the like. A few days later, I found a memo pad with "tan-san" written on it in hiragana. (Hiragana only tells you the pronunciation of a word, not its meaning.) I had no idea what it meant.

I was stumped for a long time. I assumed it was somebody named Tan. Finally I remembered the incident with the soda bottle and had a good laugh. Have you ever done something like that?
Bye for now.

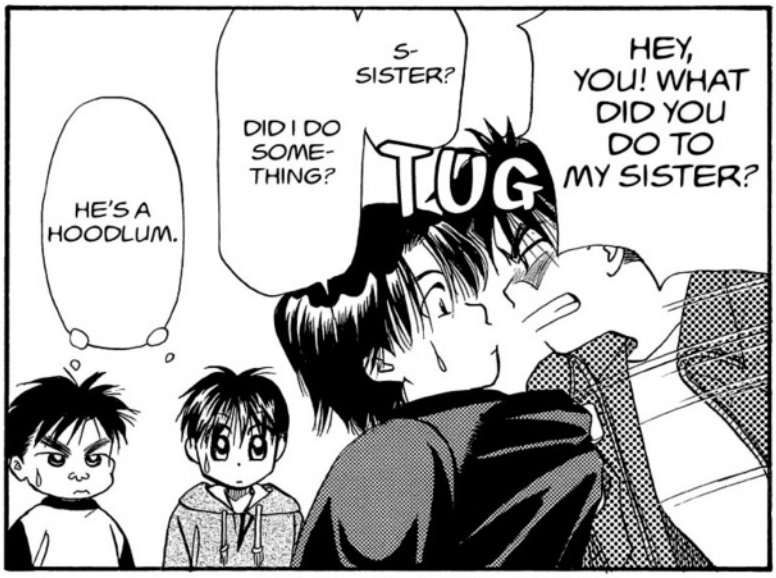


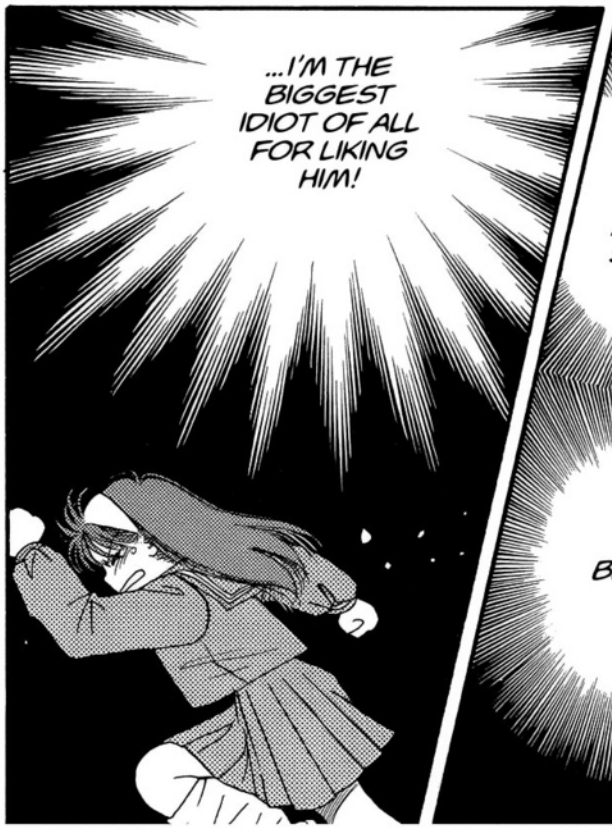


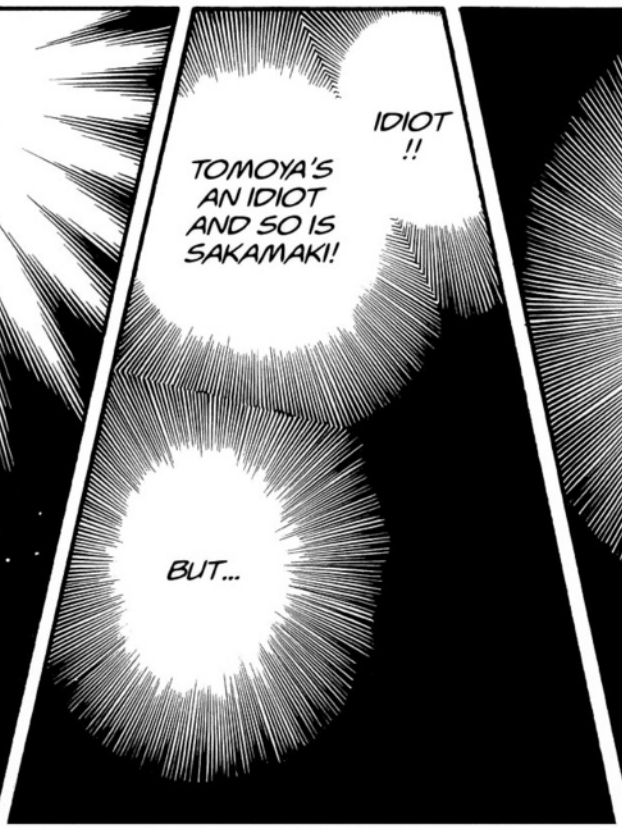
?!
WHAP

YOUR SISTER?
IDIOT?
ZANG
ZANG

I'M NOT YOUR SISTER ANY-MORE!
IDIOT!
DASH

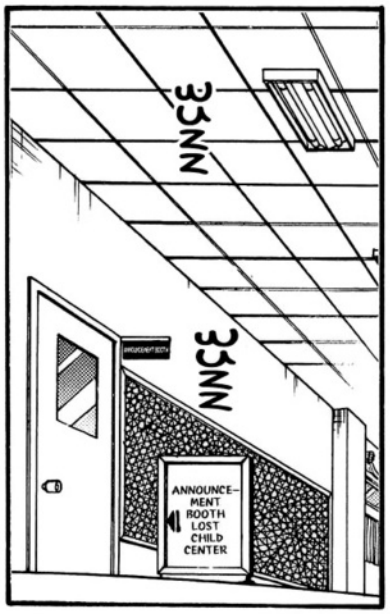

HE'S A HOODLUM.
DID I DO SOME-THING?
S-SISTER?
TUG
HEY, YOU! WHAT DID YOU DO TO MY SISTER?

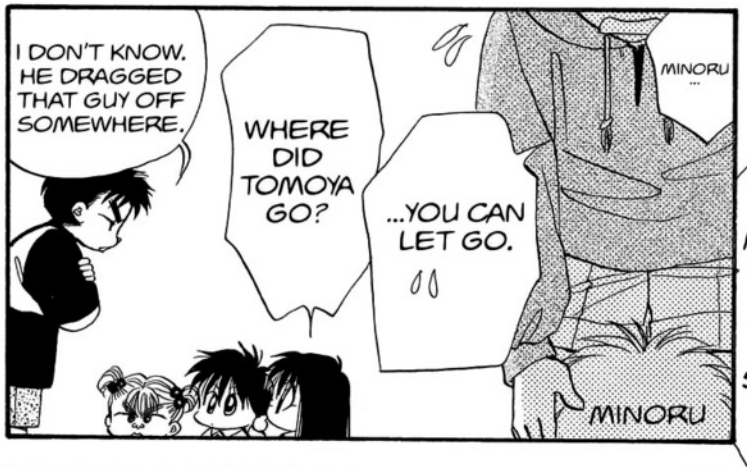

...I'M THE BIGGEST IDIOT OF ALL FOR LIKING HIM!


IDIOT !!
TOMOYA'S AN IDIOT AND SO IS SAKAMAKI!
BUT...

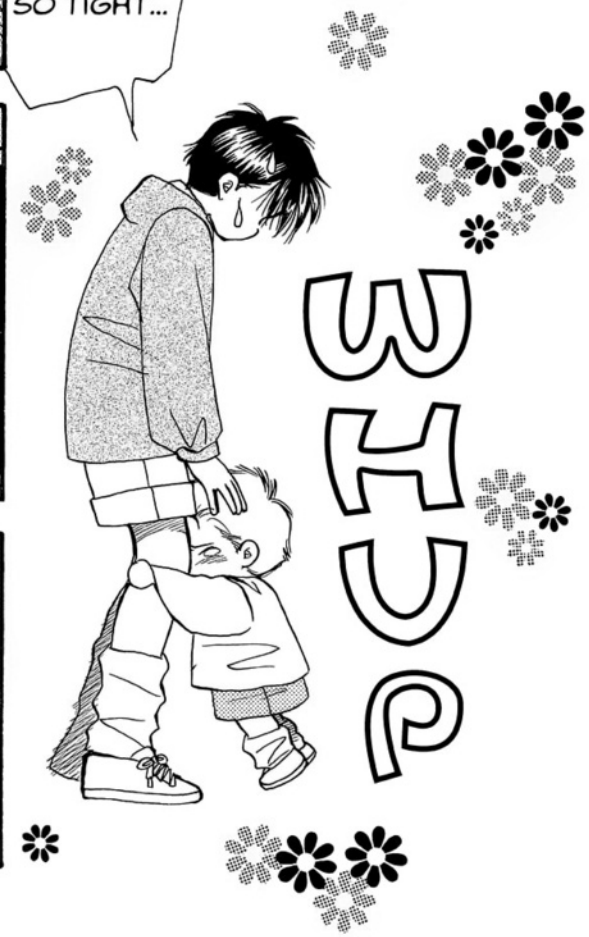
IDIOT!!

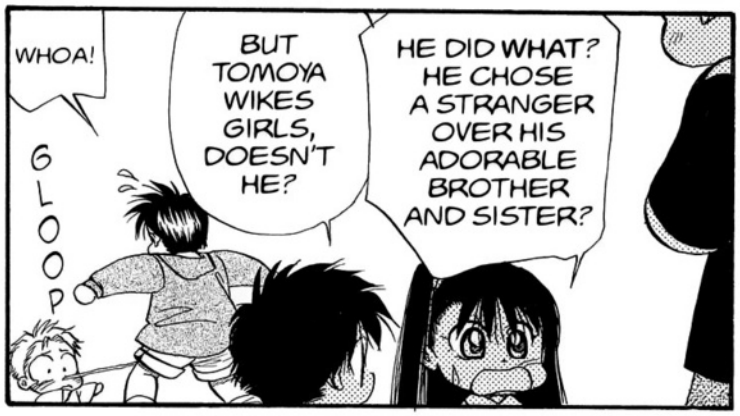
BWAZA !!
WAH !!


ANNOUNCE-MENT BOOTH LOST CHILD CENTER


I DON'T KNOW. HE DRAGGED THAT GUY OFF SOMEWHERE.
WHERE DID TOMOYA GO?
...YOU CAN LET GO.
MINORU ...
MINORU

...


M-MINORU ...YOU DON'T HAVE TO HOLD ON SO TIGHT...
WHUP


WHOA!
GLOOP
BUT TOMOYA WIKES GIRLS, DOESN'T HE?
HE DID WHAT? HE CHOSE A STRANGER OVER HIS ADORABLE BROTHER AND SISTER?

WHAT DID YOU DO TO HURT ASAKO'S FEELINGS?

HUH?
YOU GUYS ARE GOING OUT, RIGHT?
LET ME GUESS.
I SAID NO. OUR FRIENDS WOULD BUG US.
YEAH, AND...?
THEN WHAT WERE YOU TWO TALKING ABOUT WHEN I SAW YOU?
HUH? YOU'RE NOT?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK FUJII AND... I MEAN, ASAKO AND I ARE GOING OUT?
WAIT A MINUTE...
...
NOTHING MUCH.
SHE INVITED ME TO GO AROUND THE FESTIVAL WITH HER.
LIKE HER HOW? ARE YOU SERIOUS?
HUH?
DON'T YOU LIKE ASAKO?
OUCH!
DIDN'T YOU REALIZE WHAT THAT MEANT?
BONE-HEAD!
WELL, SHE DID GIVE ME CHOCO-LATES ON VALENTINE'S DAY, SO I GAVE HER A RIBBON ON WHITE DAY.
NO.
OF COURSE I'M SERIOUS. DON'T YOU FEEL ANYTHING FOR HER? DIDN'T SHE GIVE YOU A SPECIAL GIFT?

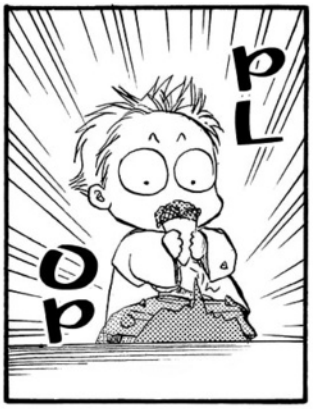
AND WHAT DID SHE MEAN WHEN SHE SAID I WAS YOUR HERO?
...
POLITE? NO WAY! ASAKO IS DEVOID OF HUMAN FEELING! SHE'D NEVER GIVE CHOCOLATES TO SOMEBODY SHE DIDN'T CARE ABOUT!
SHE'S THE COLDEST PERSON IN OUR FAMILY.
WASN'T SHE JUST BEING POLITE?
AND YOU GAVE HER A RIBBON? YOU LED HER ON, YOU CAD!
...MY IDOL FOR YEARS.
... YOU'VE BEEN...
HUH?
THE THING IS...
WELL?
OH, THAT.
WHAT A SAD CASE.
I NEVER STAND OUT IN CLASS. I'M AN ANTISOCIAL AV GEEK. I'M NOT VERY GOOD AT TALKING TO PEOPLE.
EVER SINCE I WAS LITTLE, I'VE TRIED TO FIT IN WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND ME.
SULK
SULK
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!
HUH? NO!!
SORRY, MAN. I DON'T SWING THAT WAY.

BUT WHEN I STARTED JUNIOR HIGH...
...EVERY TIME THERE WAS A SCHOOL FESTIVAL OR A BALL GAME...
WAAH
WAAH
...I'D SEE YOU. YOU WERE ALWAYS IN THE SPOTLIGHT. THERE WAS AN AIR OF EXCITEMENT AROUND YOU. YOU WERE A NATURAL LEADER. PEOPLE WERE DRAWN TO YOU!
I WAS DEEPLY IM-PRESSED.
HE'S SO COOL!
IF YOU'RE IMPRESSED, WHY DOES YOUR FACE LOOK LIKE STONE?
HEH HEH
I SEE. SO YOU WANT TO BE JUST LIKE ME, HUH?
HUH?
NOT REALLY.
I'M FINE JUST LOOKING AT YOU.
WHY NOT?
HERE.
WUNN
WUNN
TWO VANILLA, ONE CHOCOLATE AND THREE STRAWBERRY.
SOBA
PAY HERE
ICE CREAM 150 YEN EACH

...HAD BETTER PAY ME BACK FOR THIS.
TOMOYA...
HOLD THE ICE CREAM STRAIGHT, OKAY?
DON'T GET IT ON YOUR SHIRT, MINORU.
WHERE DID TOMOYA GO?
YUMMY.
HUH?

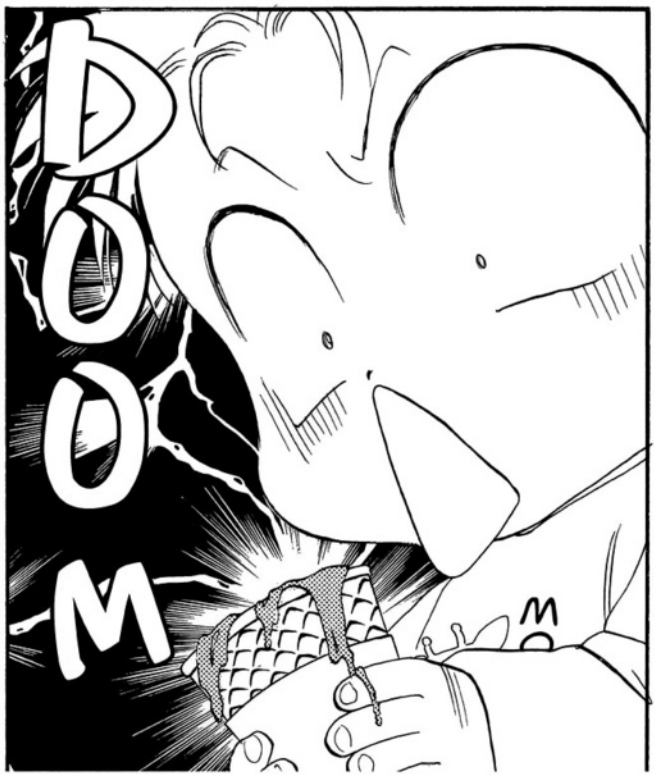
...YUMMY!
ISHE CWEAM IS...
MOO

...
GEEZ
AW, MINORU, I TOLD YOU NOT TO TIP IT!


PL
OP

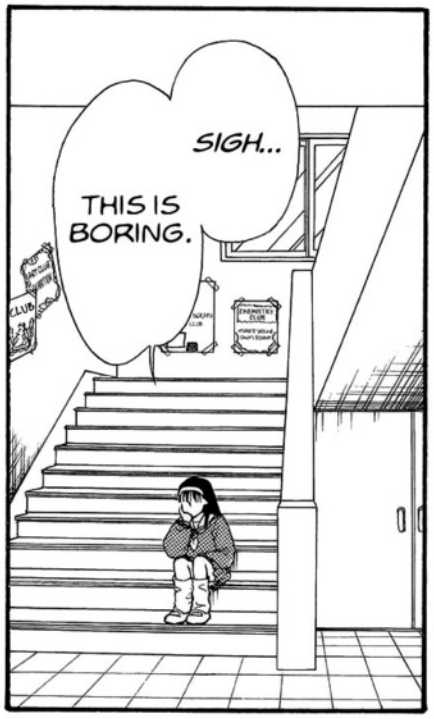
OH?
SHLUP

SPLUK


DOOM

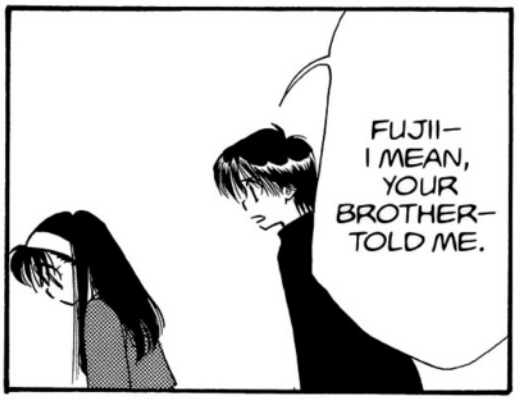
GLARE
KRAK
SWIP
HUH?
IT'S THOSE TEDDY BOYS AGAIN.
THAT'S RIGHT. NOW WHERE WERE WE?
HAVEN'T WE SEEN THESE GUYS BEFORE, MORITA?
ZIZG
ZIZG

HEY, FUJII.


SIGH...
THIS IS BORING.

YOU WANNA...
...HANG OUT WITH US?
DRAMA CLUB
CHEMISTRY CLUB
MAKE YOUR OWN SOAP

THERE YOU ARE.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.
SOCIETY STUDY CLUB
I WANTED TO APOLOGIZE.
F...
WHUP
TMP TMP
I DON'T WANT HIM TO APOLOGIZE FOR REJECTING ME.
FORGET IT! I WAS THE IDIOT! I DIDN'T THINK ABOUT HOW YOU MIGHT FEEL!
CRAFTS CLUB
BUT I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND.


FUJII— I MEAN, YOUR BROTHER— TOLD ME.

TOMOYA TOLD YOU WHAT?
HUH? LOTS OF THINGS. WHY DID YOU TRY TO HIDE THE FACT THAT HE WAS YOUR BROTHER?

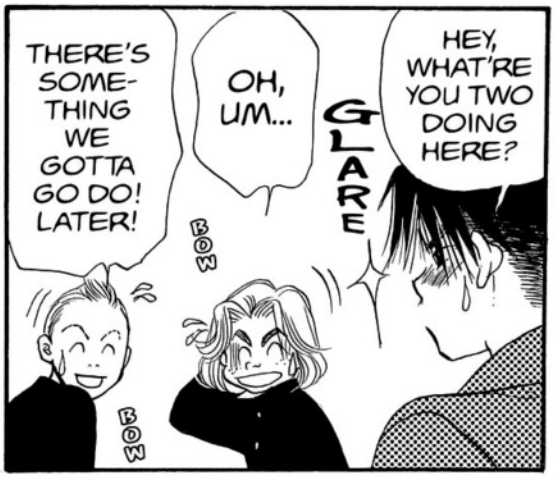
HE'S A GOOD BROTHER.
HE CARES ABOUT YOU A LOT.

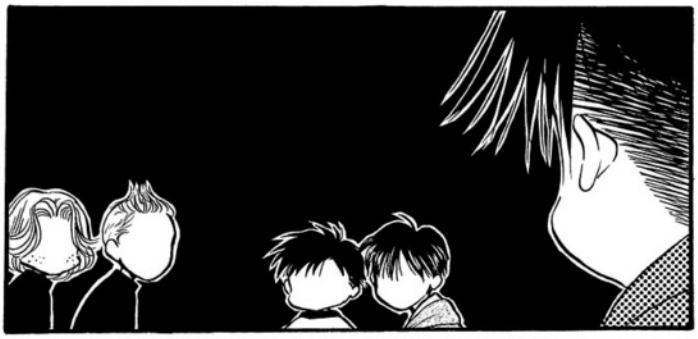
I KNOW IT'S PROBABLY TOO LATE NOW, BUT...

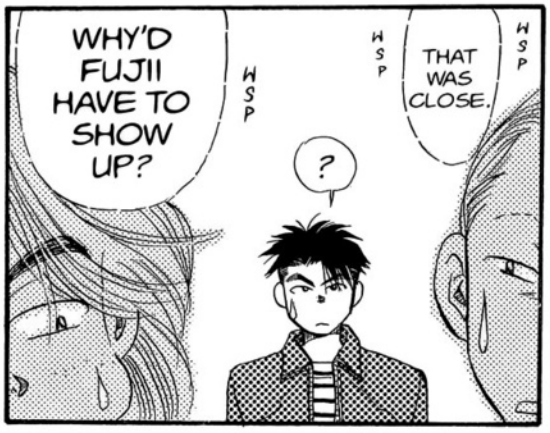
I'LL EXPLAIN WHY I SAID NO TO YOU BEFORE.
...WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO AROUND THE FESTIVAL WITH ME?
...YOU STUPID MEDDLER.
TOMOYA...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, DRAGGING MY FRIENDS OFF LIKE THAT?
HEY, YOU GUYS!
ASAKO!
HEY!
HUH?
HEY, ISN'T THAT...

WHAT A WIMP!
AAH!! SAKA-MAKI? ARE YOU OKAY?
GA-GA
!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING TO THESE KIDS?
WHAP
WOOP
WOOP
WHAK
SHUT UP! DON'T TRY TO BE A HERO!
HEH HEH HEH
AW RIGHT! JUST SHUT UP AND GIVE US SOME MONEY AND NOBODY ELSE GETS HURT.
...TOMOYA WERE HERE!
GRRR
IF ONLY...
OH, A SNITCH, EH? THEY'RE THE WORST!
YOU'RE ROBBING THEM? I'LL TELL THE TEACHERS ON YOU!
YOU'RE THE WORST.

MEN'S RESTROOM
RELIEF!
AH!
WUP

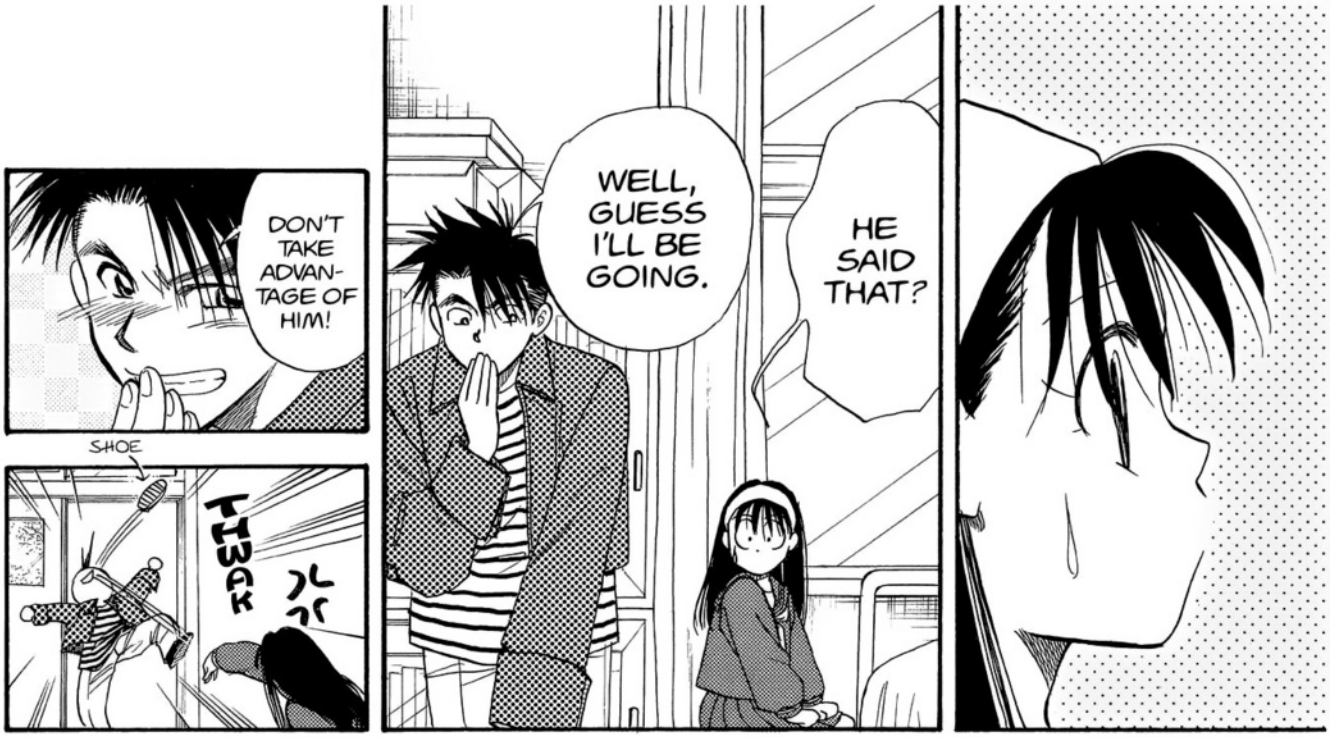

THERE'S SOMETHING WE GOTTA GO DO! LATER!
OH, UM...
HEY, WHAT'RE YOU TWO DOING HERE?
GLARE
BOW
BOW

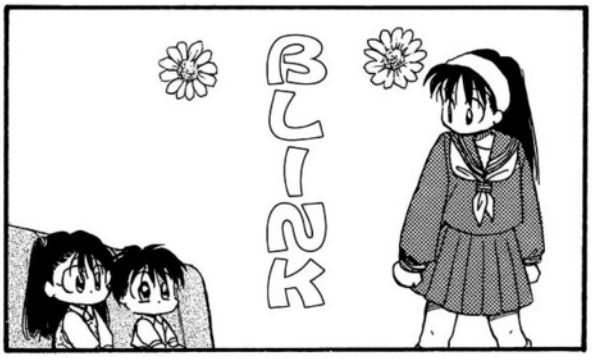


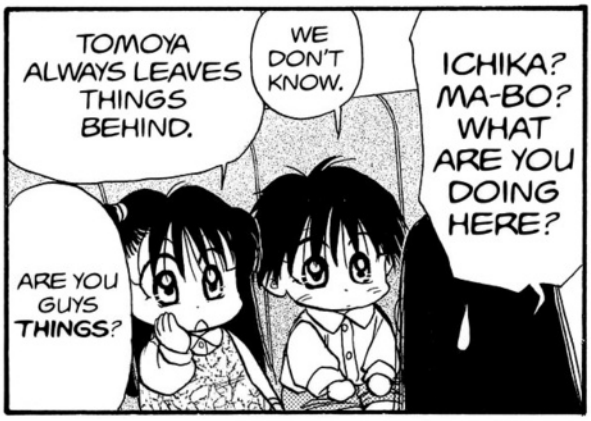

WHY'D FUJII HAVE TO SHOW UP?
WSP
WSP
THAT WAS CLOSE.
WSP
?

WHY'S EVERYBODY WAITING OUTSIDE THE JOHN FOR ME?
HUH?
...

TOMOYA!!
TMP TMP TMP TMP
HUH?
...
WE LOVE YOU!
WHAP
WHAP
LET GO OF ME!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
...IT WAS A COINCIDENCE, BUT...
I GUESS...
SAKAMAKI THINKS HE'D BE A DRAG TO HAVE AS A BOYFRIEND BECAUSE HE'S AN AV NERD. PRETTY SAD, HUH?
HEAR WHAT?
HEE HEE
THAT'S WHY I'M HIS HERO.
Because of my innate qualities.
ASAKO ...
...
DID YOU HEAR THAT?
NURSE
...TOMOYA ALWAYS SEEMS TO SHOW UP WHEN WE NEED HIM MOST.

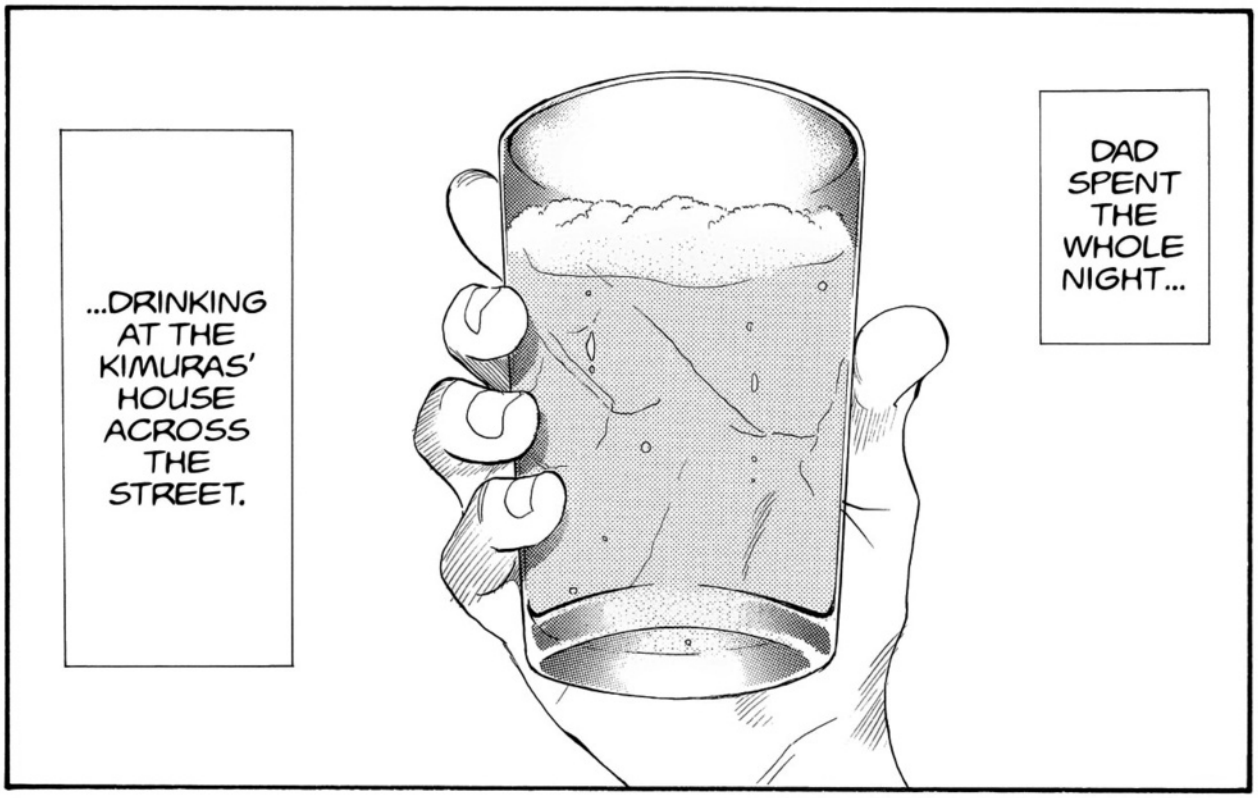


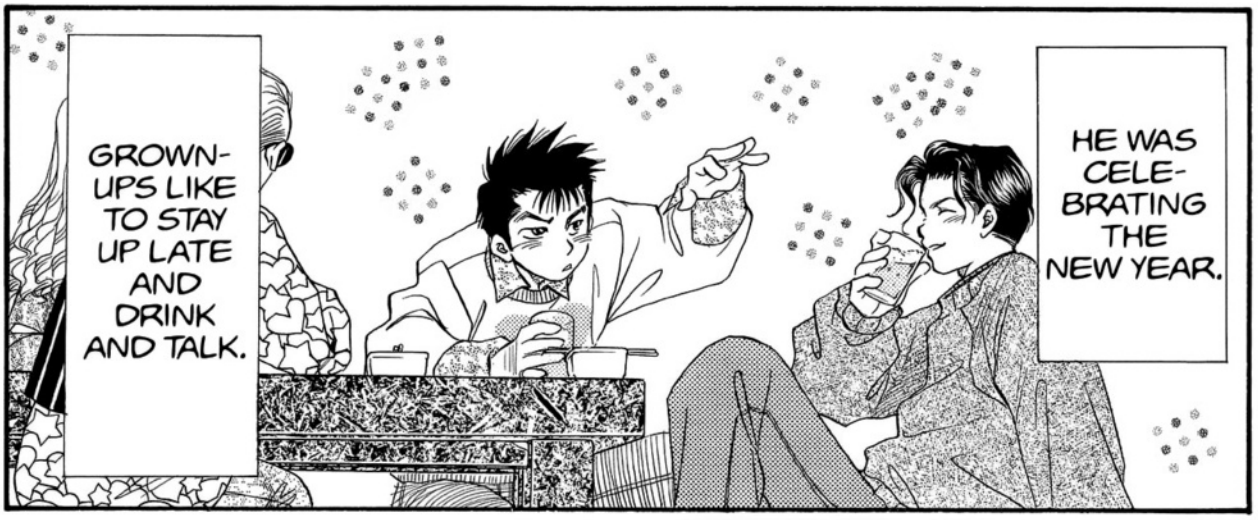


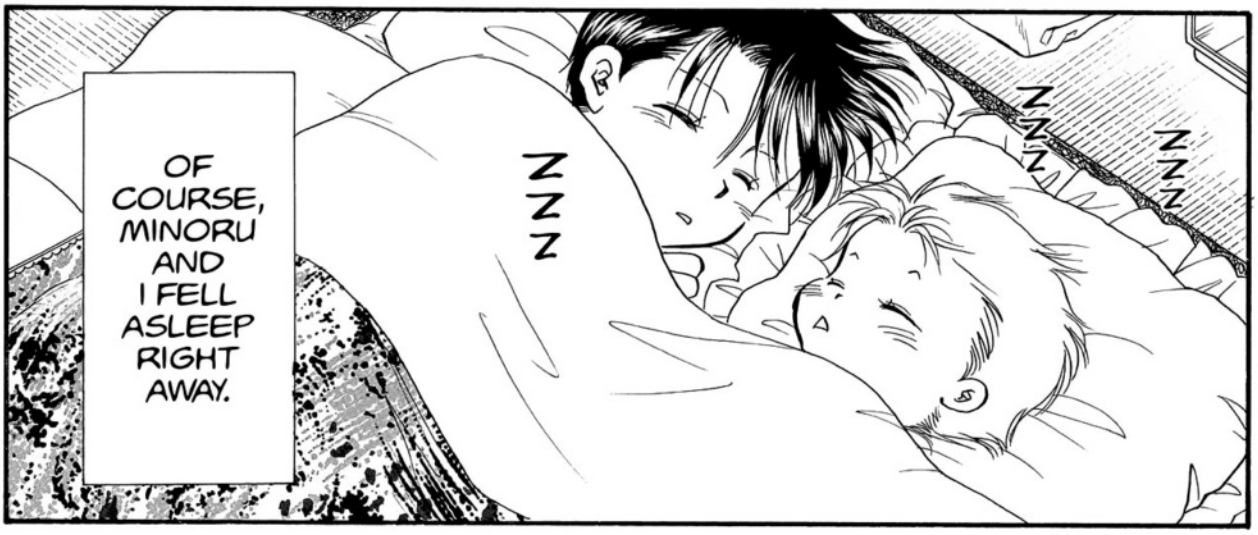


Chapter 93 / The End

Chapter 94
BABY & Me

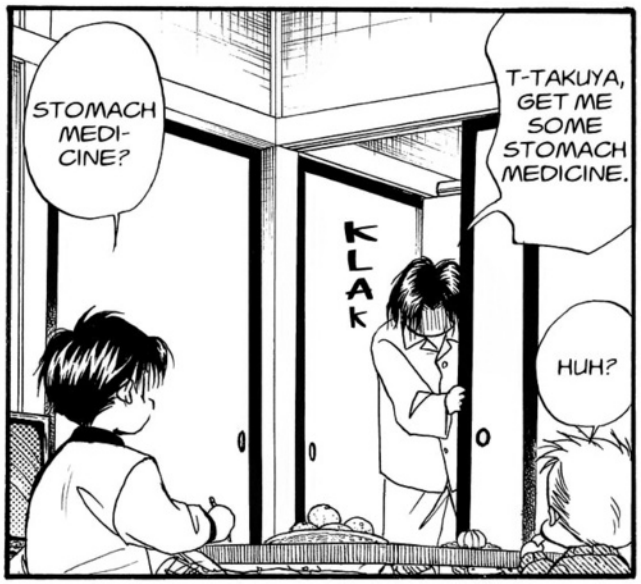

DAD SPENT THE WHOLE NIGHT...
...DRINKING AT THE KIMURAS' HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET.

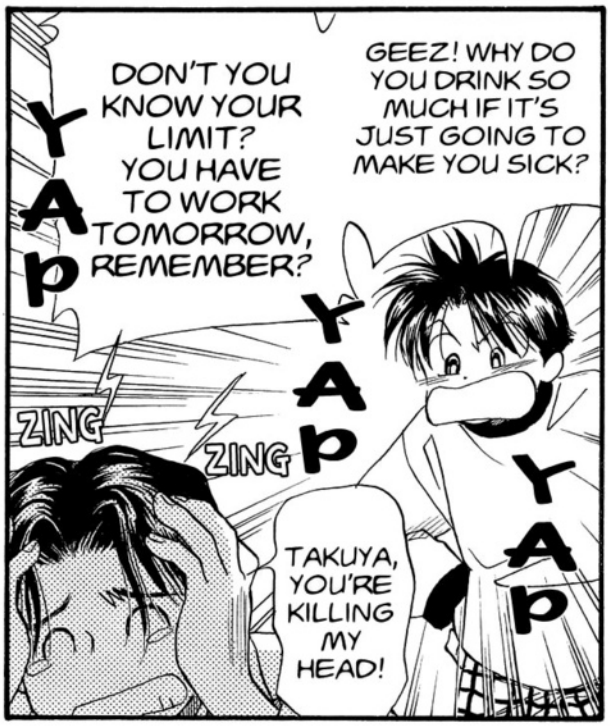

HE WAS CELE-BRATING THE NEW YEAR.
GROWN-UPS LIKE TO STAY UP LATE AND DRINK AND TALK.


OF COURSE, MINORU AND I FELL ASLEEP RIGHT AWAY.
ZZZ
ZZZ
ZZZ

I FEEL SICK.
URP
UH-OH...

NANG


STOMACH MEDI-CINE?
T-TAKUYA, GET ME SOME STOMACH MEDICINE.
KLAK
HUH?


YAP
DON'T YOU KNOW YOUR LIMIT? YOU HAVE TO WORK TOMORROW, REMEMBER?
GEEZ! WHY DO YOU DRINK SO MUCH IF IT'S JUST GOING TO MAKE YOU SICK?
YAP
YAP
ZING
ZING
TAKUYA, YOU'RE KILLING MY HEAD!

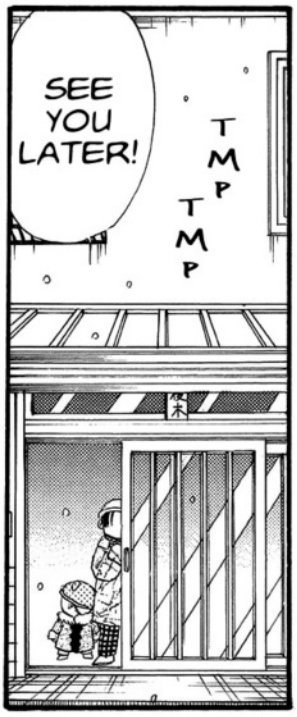
WILL YOU GO TO THE DRUG-STORE AND BUY ME SOME OF THE LIQUID KIND?
OH... SORRY. NOT THAT POWDER STUFF.
BLOOD-SHOT EYES

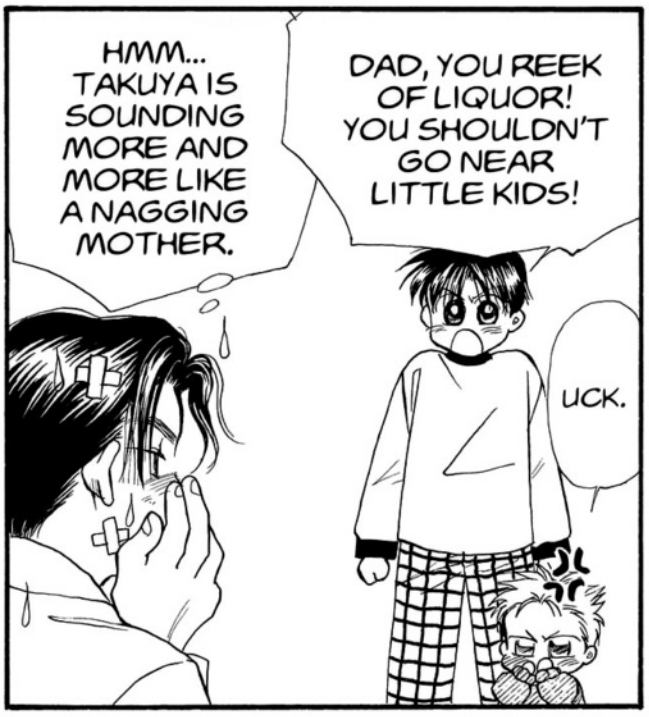
OW, OW!
WHAM WHAM WHAM
NO!!

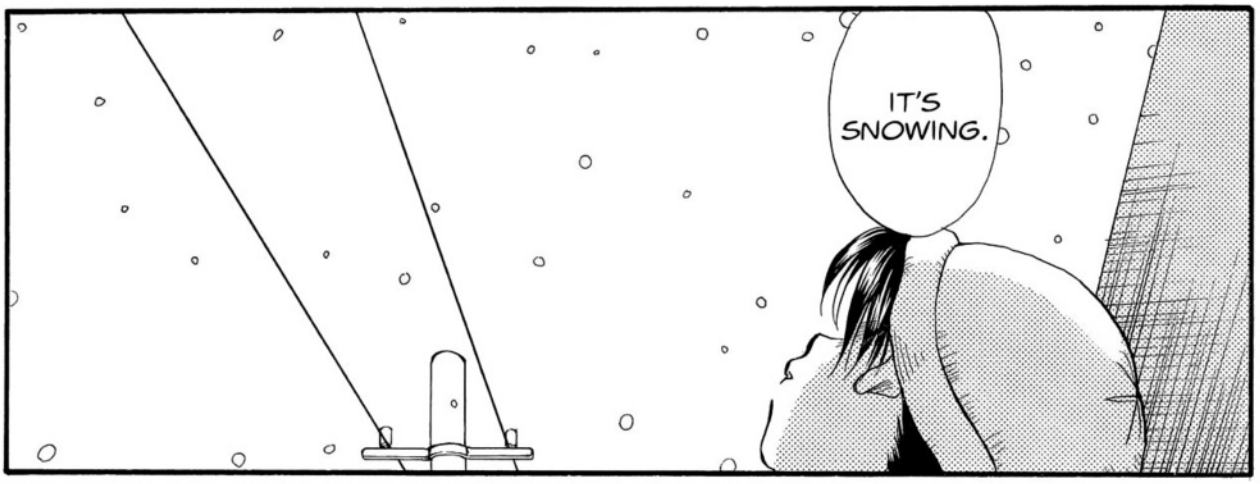
I'LL PLAY WITH YOU THIS AFTER-NOON, OKAY?
I'M FINE.
BOOZE
WHUP
BREATH
ACK!

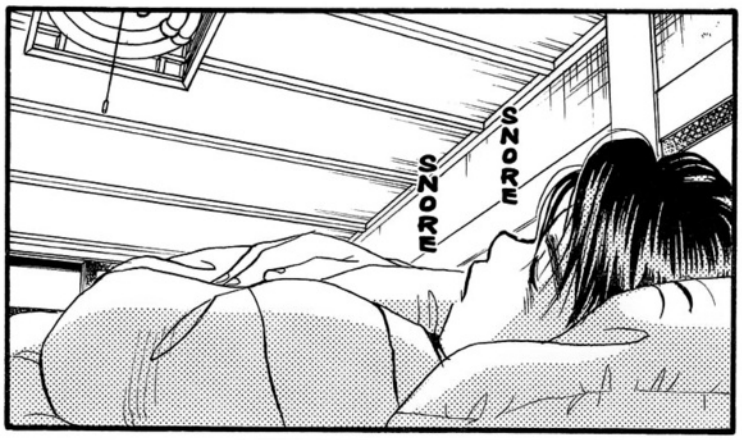
OH, MINORU ...
HEAD HURTS?
DADDY ...
TUP
TUP

AH...
HUH?


SEE YOU LATER!
TMP
TMP

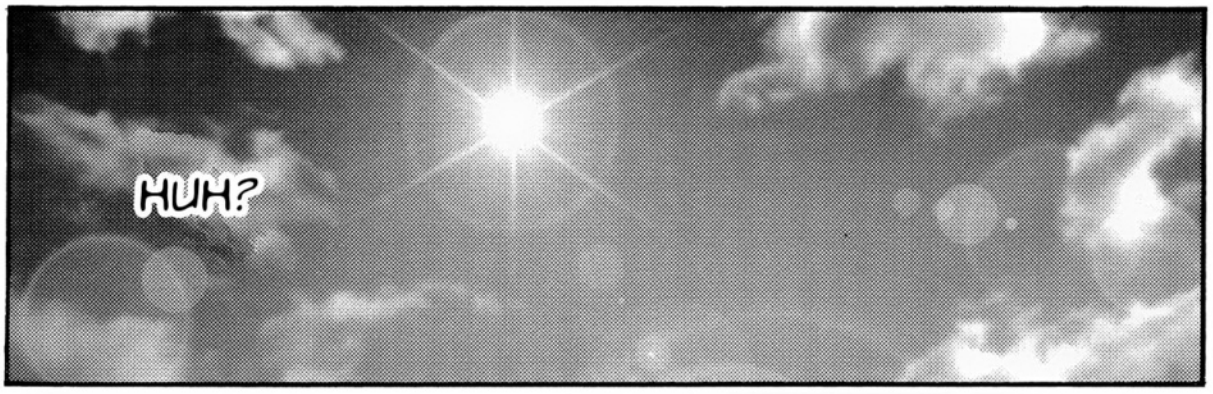

HMM... TAKUYA IS SOUNDING MORE AND MORE LIKE A NAGGING MOTHER.
DAD, YOU REEK OF LIQUOR! YOU SHOULDN'T GO NEAR LITTLE KIDS!
UCK.

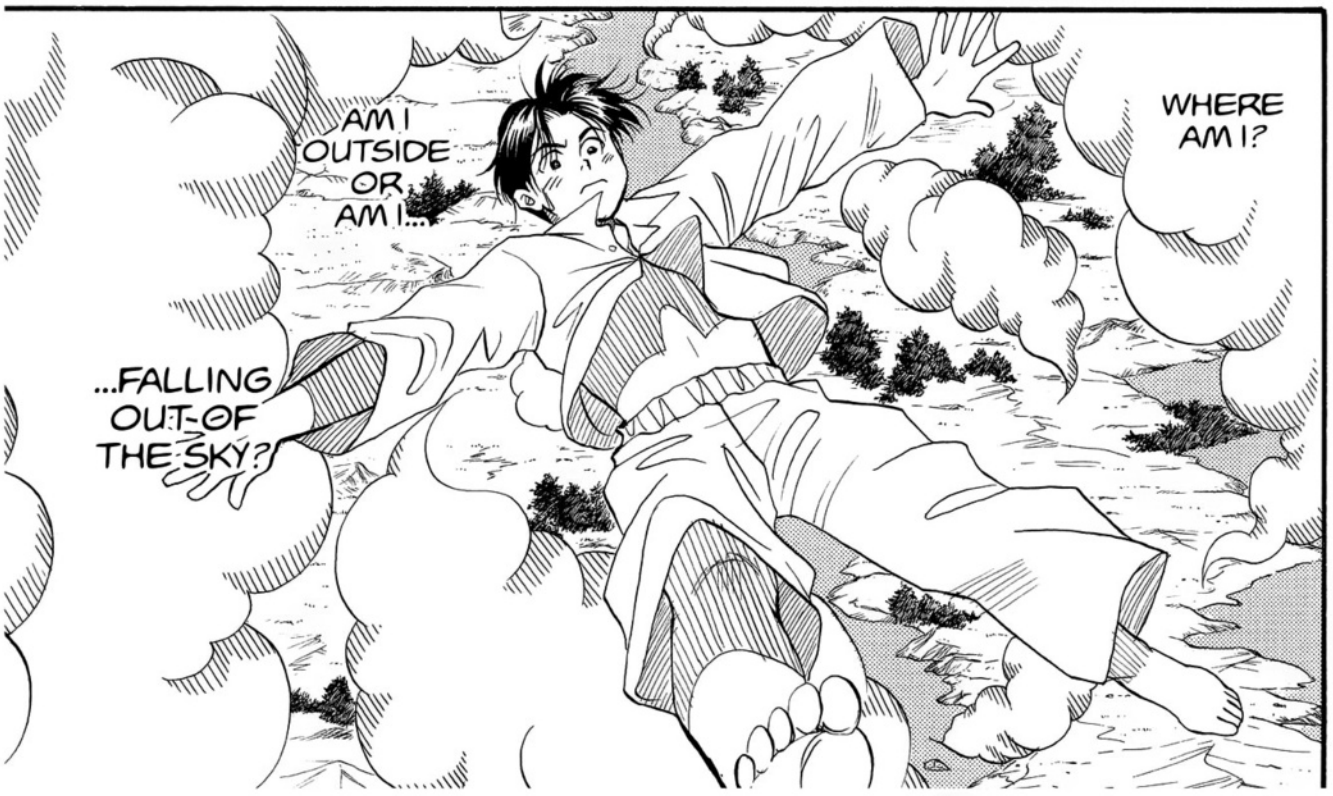

IT'S SNOWING.


SNORE
SNORE

I FEEL SO HEAVY...
...AND SLEEPY...

ZZZ


HUH?


WHERE AM I?
AM I OUTSIDE OR AM I...
...FALLING OUT OF THE SKY?

BWA-BWAAA
BWA-BWA-BWAAA
I HAVE TWO PRE-CIOUS SONS TO TAKE CARE OF!!
OH, NO!!
WOOSH
WAH!!
FWAP
FWAP
THUD
HI!♡
NI HAO!♡
BONG
(THE SOUND OF A GONG)

Author's Note Part 4

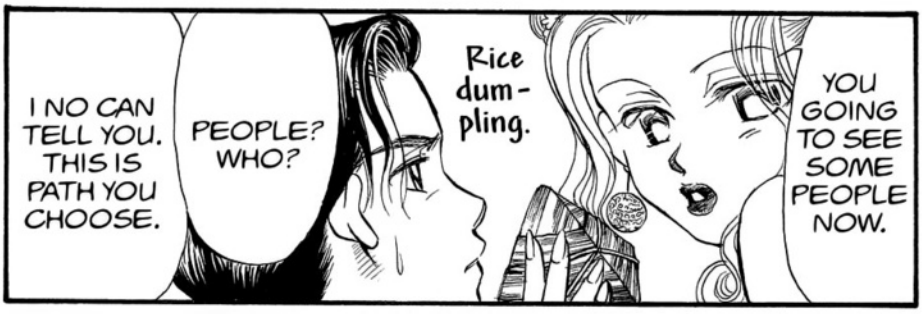
We've got a bigger workroom now.

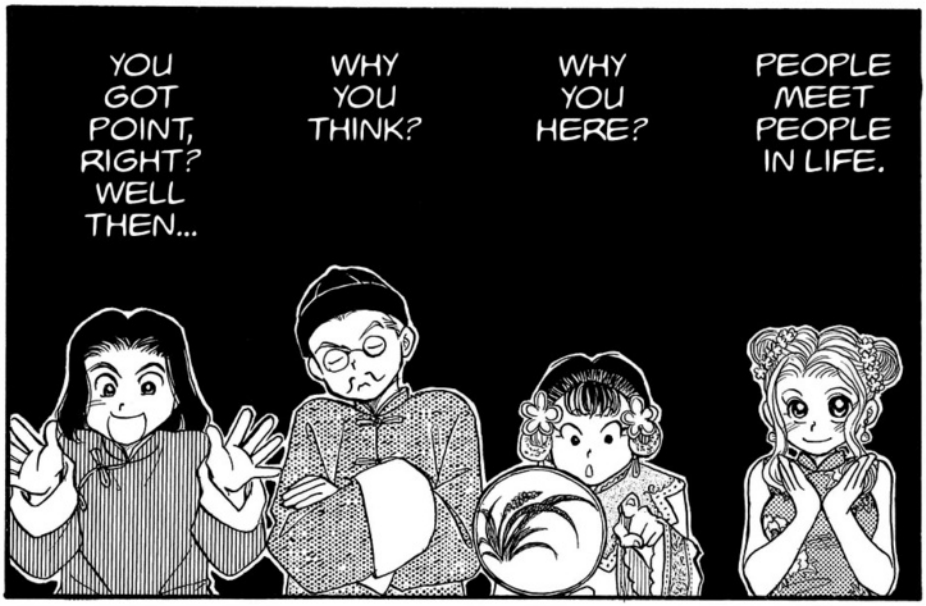
It's so much more spacious that I feel lost when I'm in there by myself, so I made a rule not to go in there unless I have work to do.

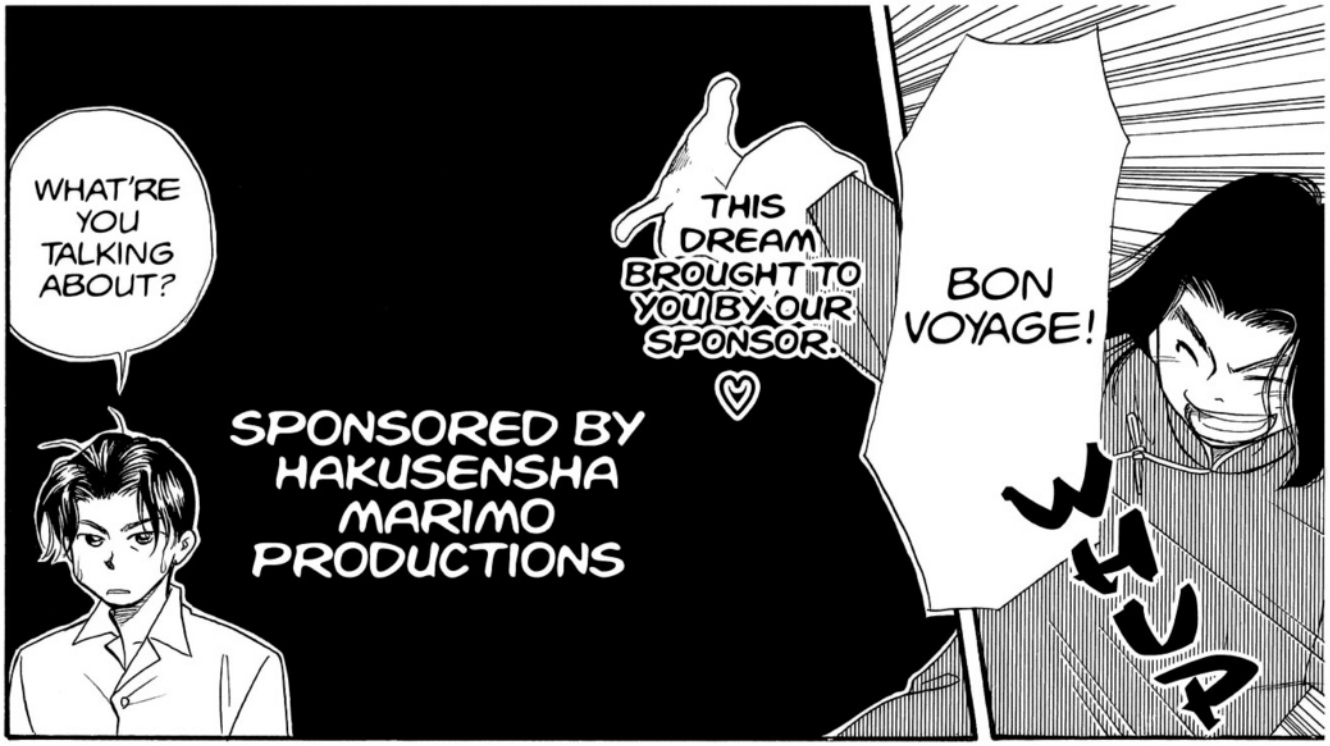
But I have to go in the workroom when I work on colored illustrations.

So I work quietly all by myself, but everything — the TV, the stereo, the speakers — is far away. I feel so lonely!

If you want to know how I feel, here's a good analogy. It's like I'm all by myself in a classroom after school practicing kanji, one hundred times each. That's the feeling.



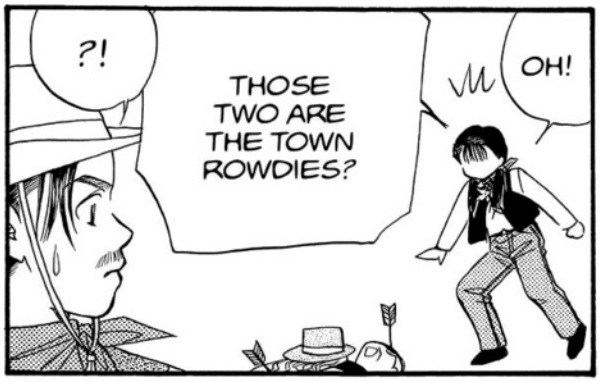




*Japanese slang for someone who drinks a lot, but doesn't get drunk: drink goes right through them like a sieve.

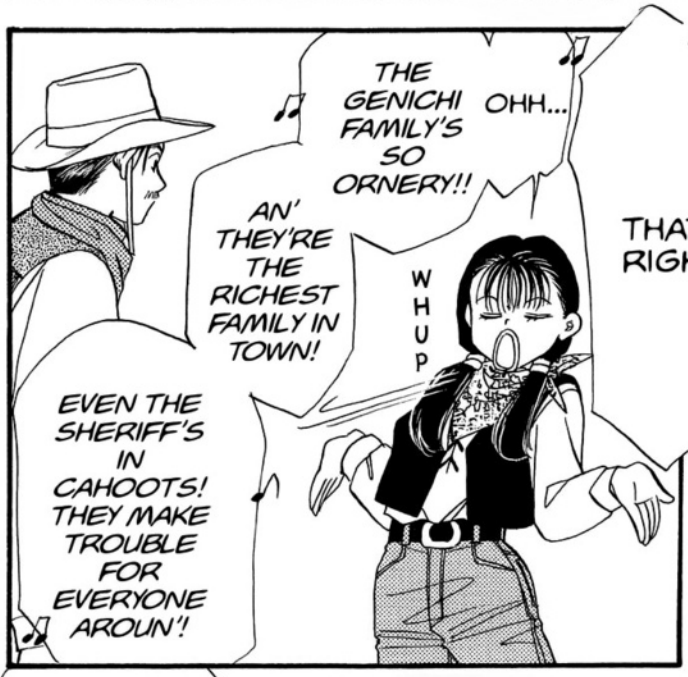
KLOP
KLOP
KLOP
KLOP
UM...
HMM...
WHERE AM I GOING?
WHAT A STRANGE HORSE.
AND WHERE'D I GET THIS MUSTACHE?
FRANCES
HUFF
HUFF
KLOP
KLOP
THAT'S A WOMAN'S VOICE!
HUH?
HELP ME!!
AAAAH!!
YUCK.
MRS. KIMURA (IN A MALE ROLE)
A WOMAN!
IT'S A WOMAN!
HEH
HEH
HEH
MR. KIMURA
HEY, LEAVE HER ALONE!
HELP ME!
HA HA HA! WAIT!
ROLLI-N'♪
ROLLI-N'♪
ROLLI-N'♪

NO!
BWOING
BWOING
BWOING
BLAM
BLAM
ADIOS, MUCHACHOS!
HERE, TAKE MY HAND.
WIP
YOU ALL RIGHT, LITTLE LADY?
AH... AH'M FINE.
WHUP
THANK YOU SO MUCH.
ROCKET LAUNCHER
BOM!!


?!
THOSE TWO ARE THE TOWN ROWDIES?
OH!

SEIICHI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHY DO YOU THINK?
WHAT DID YOU DO THAT FOR?

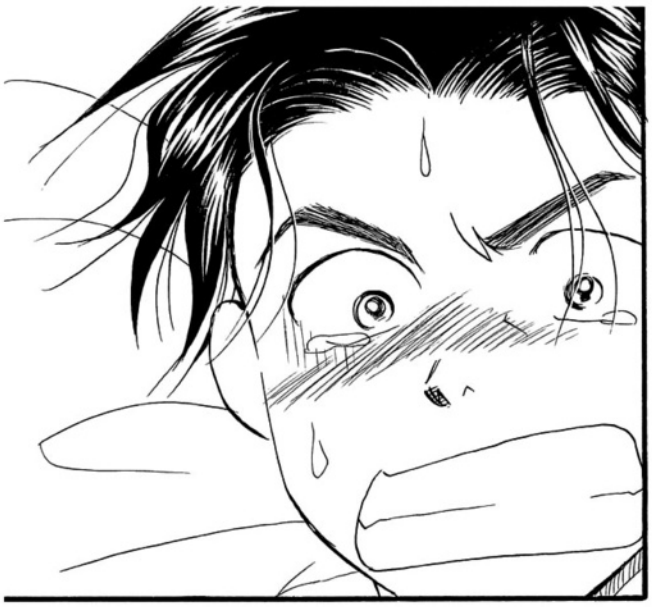
UH... YEAH. WHO ARE YOU?
BUT YOU FIXED 'EM FOR US, MR. DRIFTER!


THE GENICHI FAMILY'S SO ORNERY!!
OHH...
AN' THEY'RE THE RICHEST FAMILY IN TOWN!
WHUP
EVEN THE SHERIFF'S IN CAHOOTS! THEY MAKE TROUBLE FOR EVERYONE AROUN'!

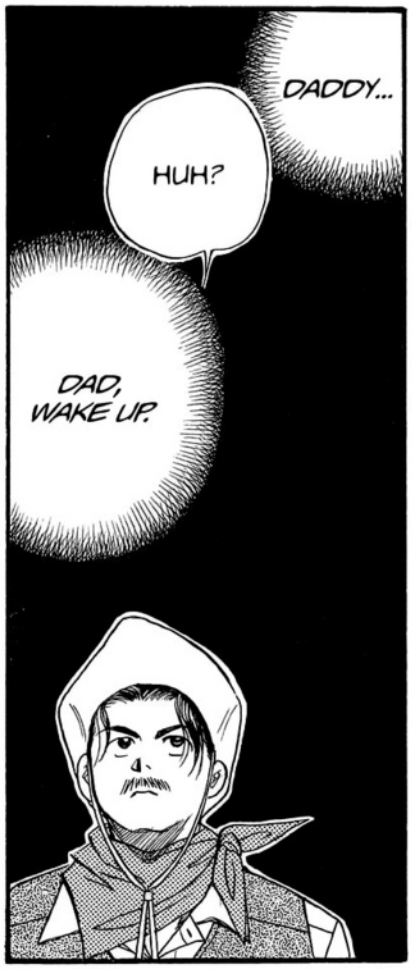
YES!!
THAT'S RIGHT!
TOMOKO?

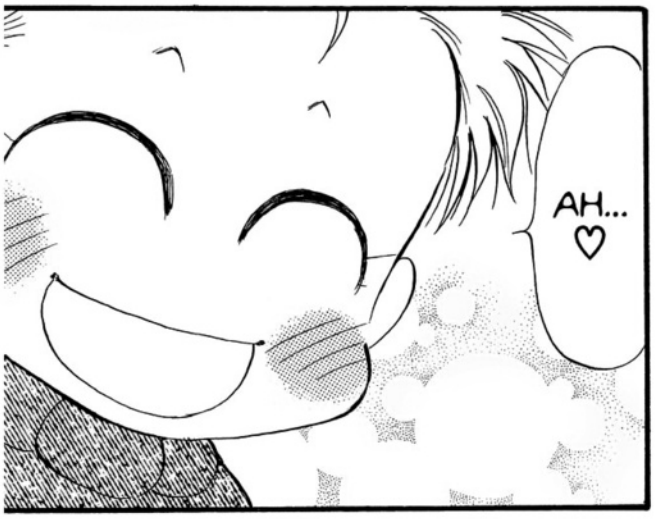
BARS, CASINOS ...THEY OWN THE VIEW!
WHAT CAN WE DO? WHAT CAN WE DOOO?
DUMP-DA-DUMP DA
THE COURT OF LAW'S SO FAR AWAY...
...WE AIN'T NEVER GET A CHANCE TO HAVE OUR SAY!
DUMP-DA-DUMP

THE WONDER-FUL GUNMAN!
WHO WILL?
BECAUSE HE'LL SAVE THE DAY!
WHY IS THAT?
BUT NOW WE'RE OKAY!
GUNNNN-MANNNN!
HE'S OUR...
OUR GUNMAN!
OUR GUNMAN!
COME BACK, GUNMAN !!
NO!!
BYE.
KLOP
KLOP

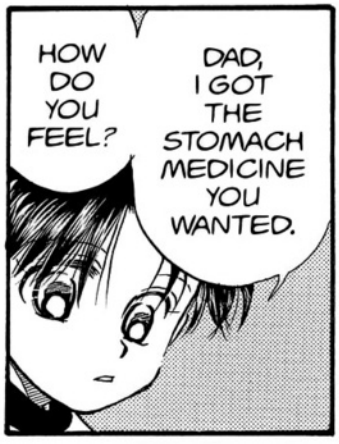


TUG
THUD

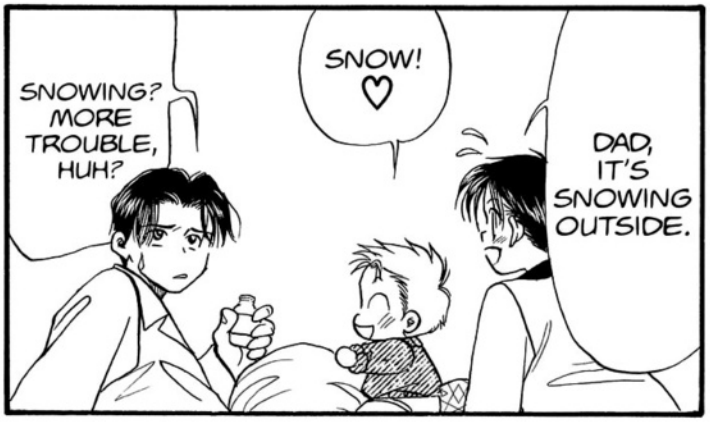

DADDY...
HUH?
DAD, WAKE UP.


AH... ♡

BUT I'LL BE OKAY IN TIME.
TER-RIBLE.


HOW DO YOU FEEL?
DAD, I GOT THE STOMACH MEDICINE YOU WANTED.

...
DADDY, WAKE UP.
MINORU, THAT WAS A ROUGH WAY TO WAKE ME UP.
Ha ha ha


SNOWING? MORE TROUBLE, HUH?
SNOW! ♡
DAD, IT'S SNOWING OUTSIDE.

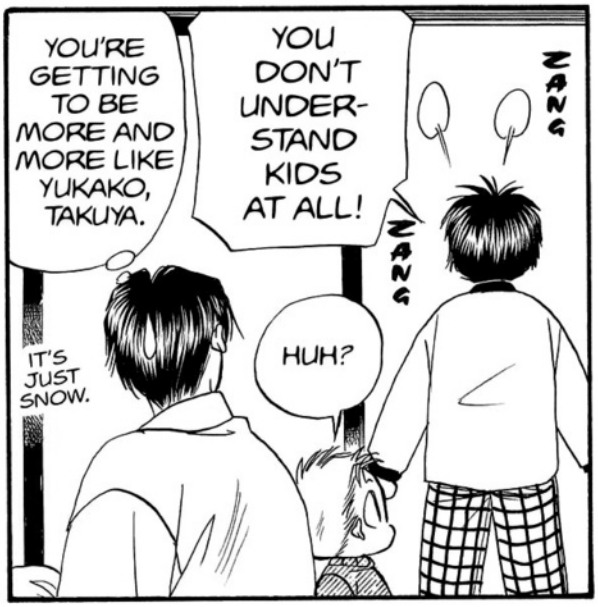
BUT MINORU AND I LIKE THE SNOW.

THE TRAIN SCHEDULE WILL BE MESSED UP...
...AND THE FROZEN ROADS ARE BOUND TO BE SLIPPERY.
SIP

TROUBLE?
...
EVERY-ONE HAS TO GO TO WORK TOMOR-ROW.

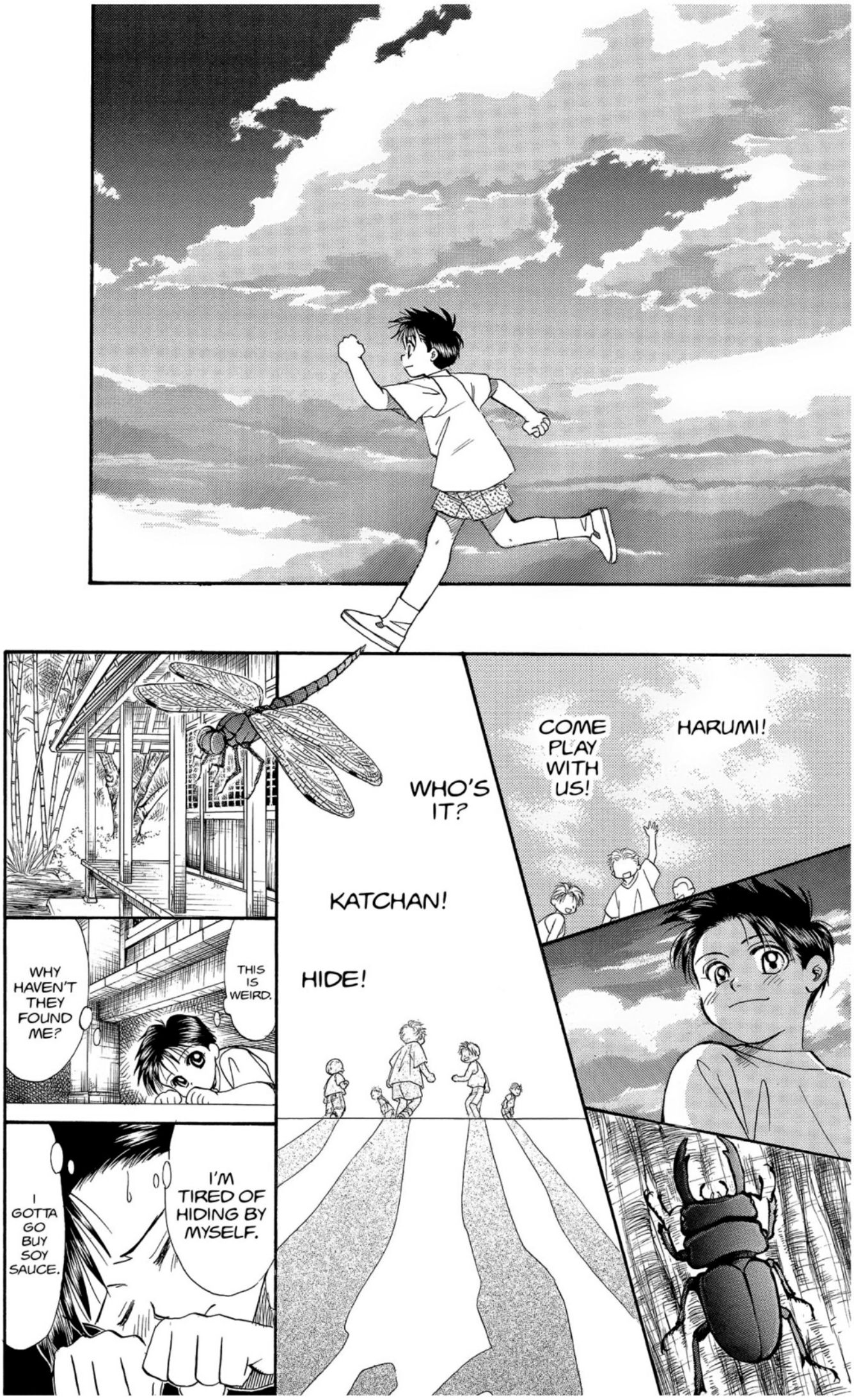
I DON'T REMEM-BER.

DID I EVER LIKE THE SNOW?


YOU'RE GETTING TO BE MORE AND MORE LIKE YUKAKO, TAKUYA.
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND KIDS AT ALL!
NANG
NANG
IT'S JUST SNOW.
HUH?

WHEN YOU GROW UP, YOU FORGET THINGS LIKE THAT.

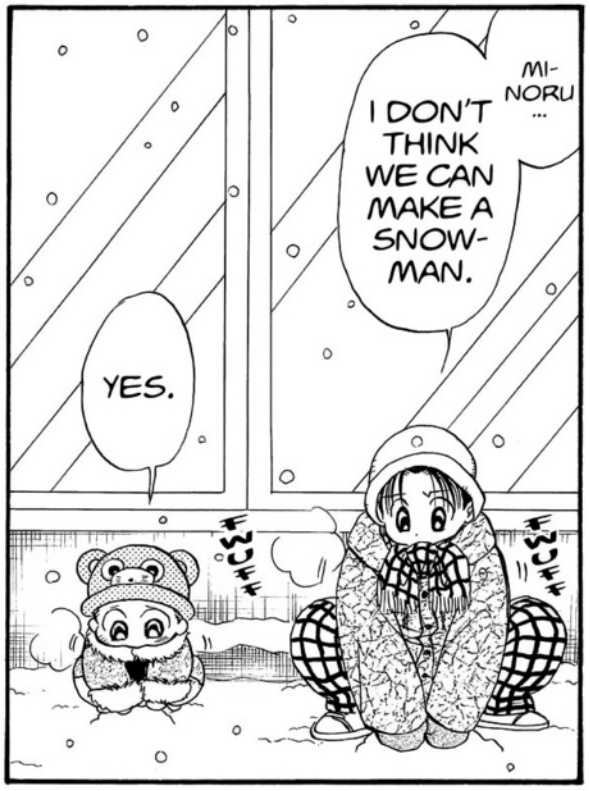
OH, HARUMI. I'M GLAD YOU'RE THERE.
HOW OLD AM I?
WOO
I'M LITTLE!
ZANG
HEY? WHAT HAPPENED?
WILL YOU GO BUY SOME SOY SAUCE?
HURRY BACK, OKAY?
MOM.
...
SOY SAUCE, RIGHT?
OKAY.


COME PLAY WITH US!
HARUMI!
WHO'S IT?
KATCHAN!
HIDE!
WHY HAVEN'T THEY FOUND ME?
THIS IS WEIRD.
I'M TIRED OF HIDING BY MYSELF.
I GOTTA GO BUY SOY SAUCE.

WHAT KIND OF A MAN WILL YOU GROW UP TO BE?

HMM ...
THERE'S NOT ENOUGH SNOW.

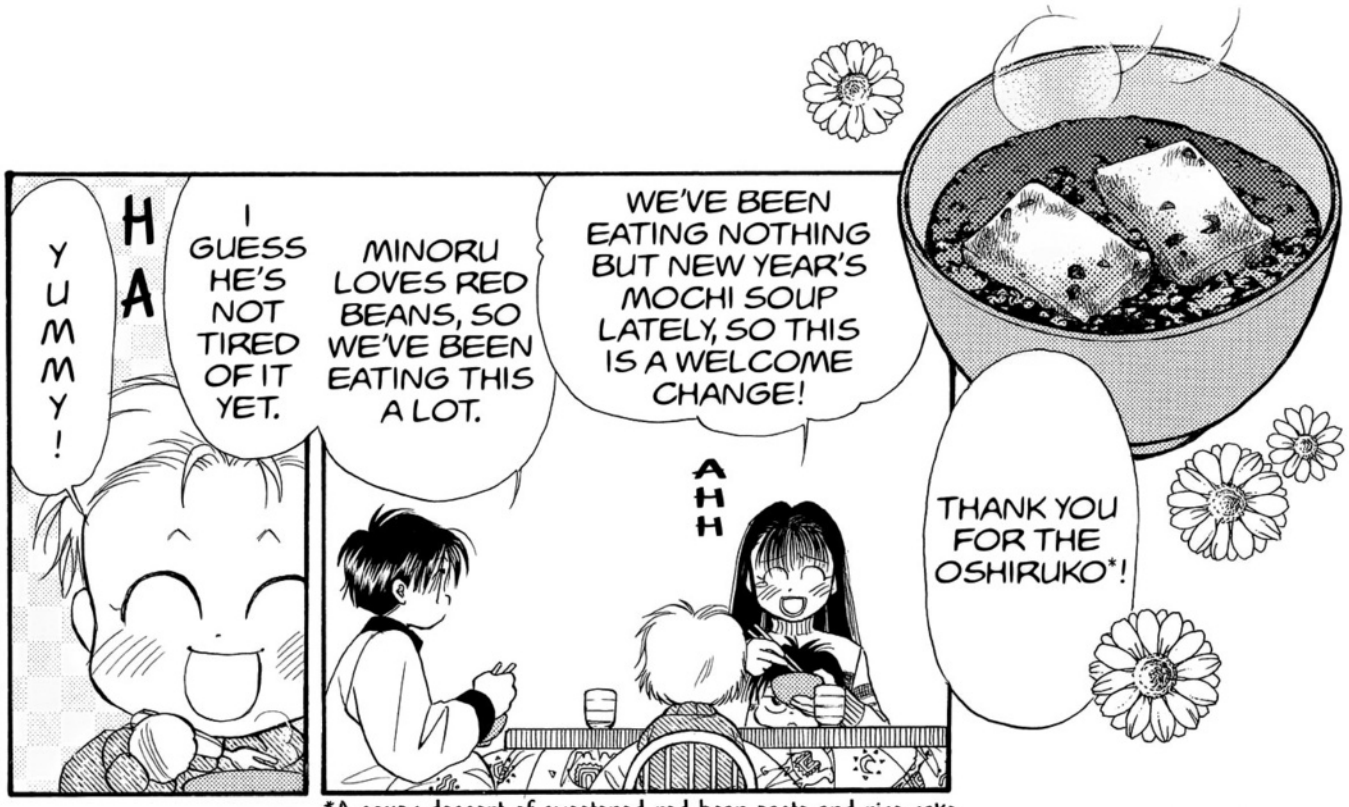
WE CAN'T MAKE IT NOW.
BUT ...
NO! SNOW-MAN!
TAKUYA! MINORU!


MI-NORU ...
I DON'T THINK WE CAN MAKE A SNOW-MAN.
YES.
ぎゅっぎゅっ
ぎゅっぎゅっ

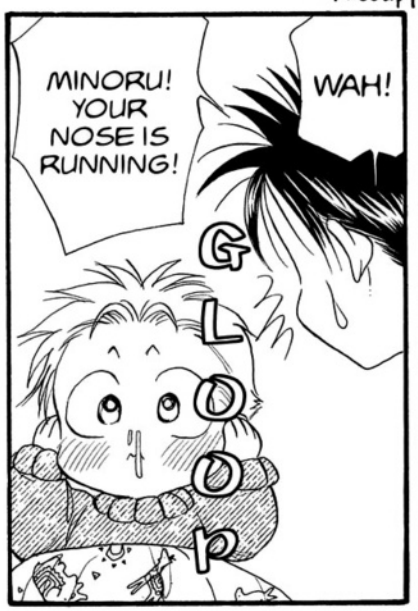
IT'S FUN TO PLAY OUTSIDE IN THE SNOW, HUH?
HOW'S HARUMI?
HUH? TOMOKO ...
WAAAH
MINORU!

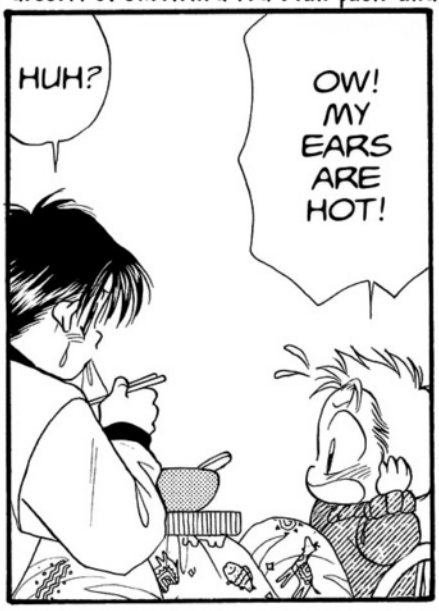
EVERY-BODY'S HUNG-OVER IN OUR HOUSE, TOO, EXCEPT THE TWO OF US.
HA HA! I THOUGHT SO.
HE'S IN BED WITH A HANG-OVER.

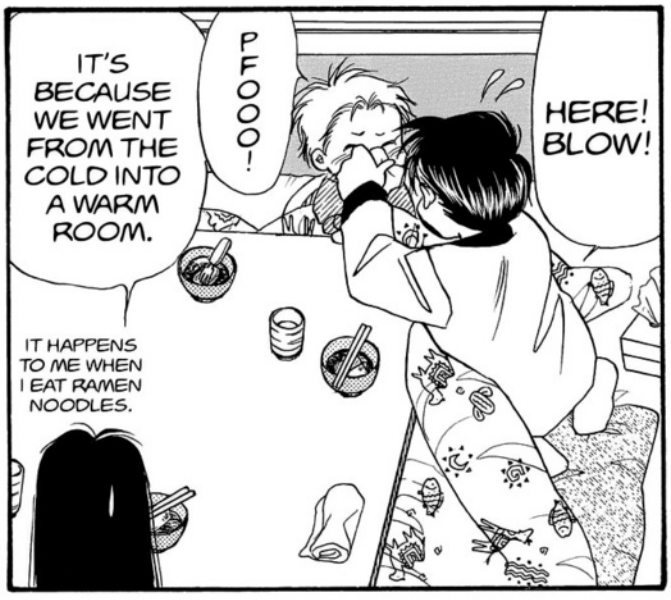
DO YOU WANT TO GO INSIDE?
WELL...
OUCH! MY EARS ARE CO'D.



*A soupy dessert of sweetened red bean paste and rice cake.







TAICHI

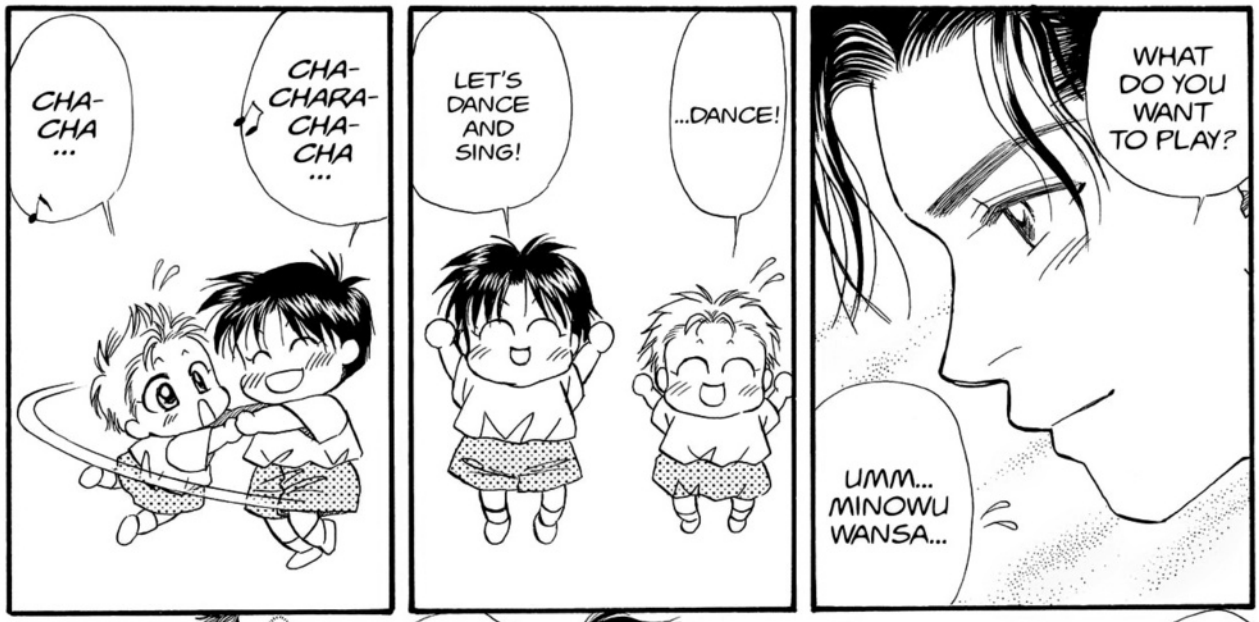
I'M A LONE SPACE FIGHTER PILOT.
BUT HAVING SAID THAT...
...WHAT THE HECK DOES IT MEAN?
I REMEMBER. WHEN I WAS IN JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL...
...I USED TO LIKE THESE KINDS OF CARTOONS AND MOVIES.
WMM
!
WMM
WMM
WHOA!
It's huge!
WMM
KRRT
COME IN, HARUMI!

THAT'S IT?
KLIK
...AND TRUST YOUR OWN INSTINCTS AND SKILL. GOOD LUCK!
THERE WILL BE TOO MUCH ELECTRO-MAGNETIC INTERFERENCE. SO SWITCH ALL YOUR SYSTEMS FROM AUTOMATIC TO MANUAL ...
IF YOU GO INSIDE THE FIELD OF THE ENEMY CARRIER, WE'LL LOSE CONTACT.
HARUMI HERE!
HARUMI ...
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
YU-
WOOSH
YUKI!!
Y-YUKI? HUH?
LET'S COME THROUGH THIS ALIVE.
OH?
I'M OUT IN SPACE, BUT I'M FINE.
THIS IS SUR-PRISING.
PLEASE!
CHAK
WAIT!

I WAS A REAL DREAMER, WASN'T I?
I'M ON TOP OF A RAIN-BOW!
YEAH!
HARUMI!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME!
HOW ARE YOU?
GUESS WHAT I'M DOING?
SEE YOU!
SO LONG!
OH! IT'S MARIA, THE LADY WHO TOOK CARE OF ME WHEN I WAS STUDYING ABROAD.
HELLO, HARUMI!
LONG TIME NO SEE!

♬ IN THE LAND BEYOND THE RAINBOW FAR, FAR AWAY ALL YOUR OLD FRIENDS ARE WAITING ON THIS SPECIAL DAY.
HA HA...
I KNOW THEM ALL!
HEY...
OH.
THIS IS COOL!
POOF

IT'S HER, JUST LIKE SHE WAS THE FIRST TIME I MET HER.
YUKAKO ...
BOW
MOM!
DAD!
HA HA...
I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOU ALL OVER AGAIN.
HA HA...
DADDY!
MOM!
TAKUYA! MINORU!
PLAY WITH US!
PWAY!
WHY ARE YOU SO LITTLE?



SANK YOU...

THANK YOU. WE HAD A GREAT TIME.

FUN!

IT'S FUN.

...BEWY MUCH!

APPRECIATE YOUR PAST AND LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR FUTURE!

DWEAM!

THIS IS A DREAM. YOU CAN DO ANY-THING YOU WANT...

YEAH.

YEAH!

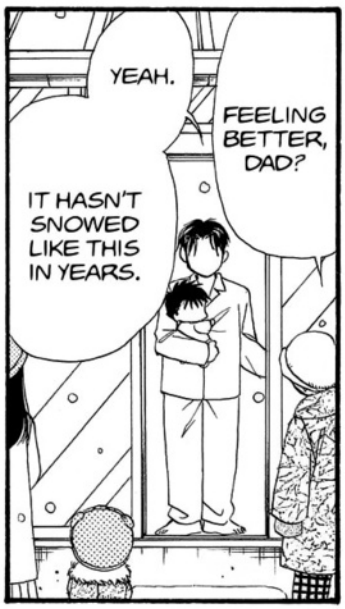
FINE!

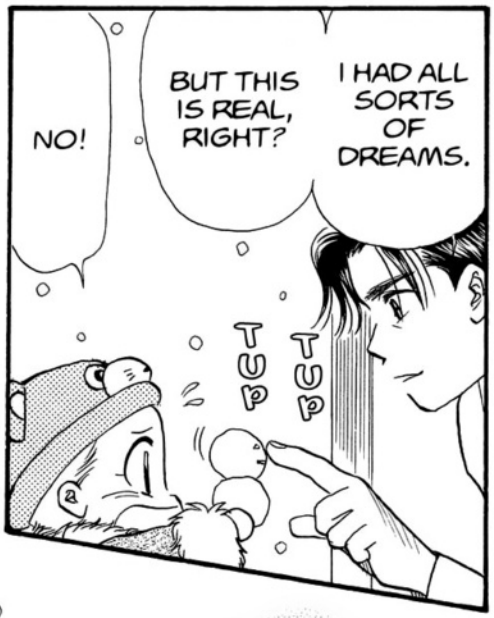
...LIKE MEET OLD FRIENDS AND TELL THEM YOU'RE DOING FINE.

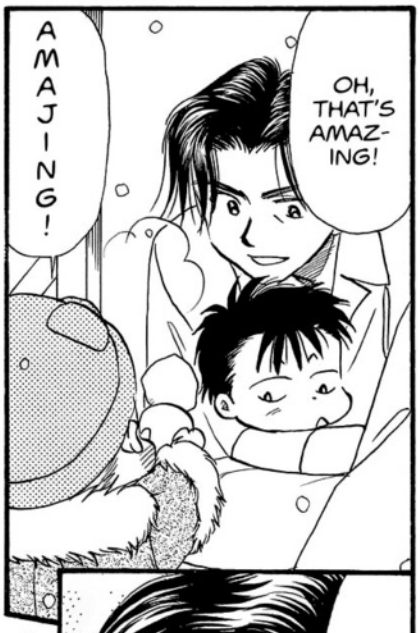
YUKAKO?
WHERE'D SHE GO?
YEAH.
YEAH.
OOF!
KERSPLAT
MINORU?
BOOM
WAH!
MINORU?
TAKUYA?
ADADA DA DA.
ADA ADADA.
...
DID YOU ENJOY YOUR DREAM? IT WAS GIVEN TO YOU AS A SPECIAL NEW YEAR'S GIFT.
GOO.
WOW! TAICHI, YOU'RE SO BIG.
HEY!

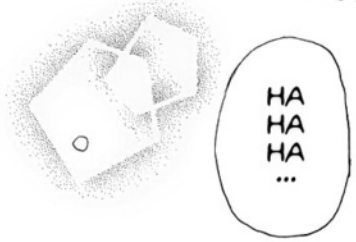
HA!
NEW YEAR'S GIFT?
WHAT A FUNNY DREAM...
I NEVER EXPECTED TO GET A NEW YEAR'S GIFT AT MY AGE.
BUT IT'S NICE.
WELL, THEN...
ADA.
HUH?
BOM
GOOD-BYE.♥
UGH...
ADA ADA. ♡
KLAK
BOOM!!

ZOON
...
HUH?
HUH?
WAH
WAH
?!
YAY YAY
STARE
T-TAICHI?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

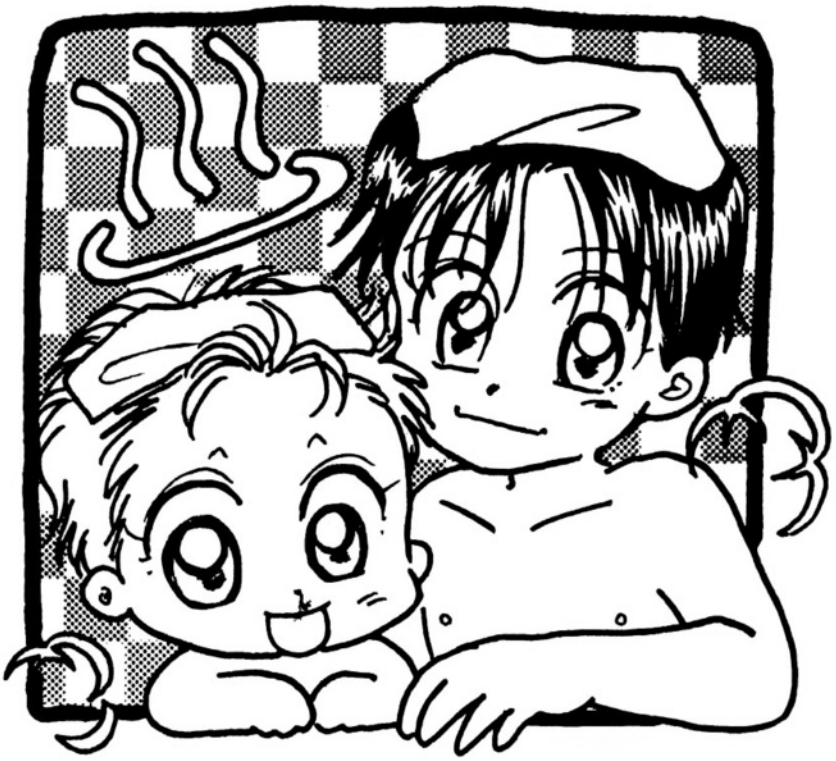






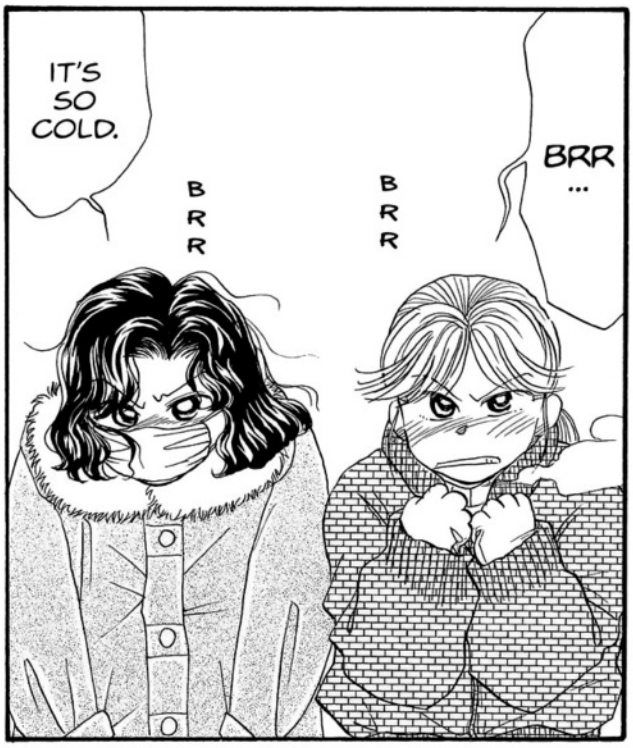


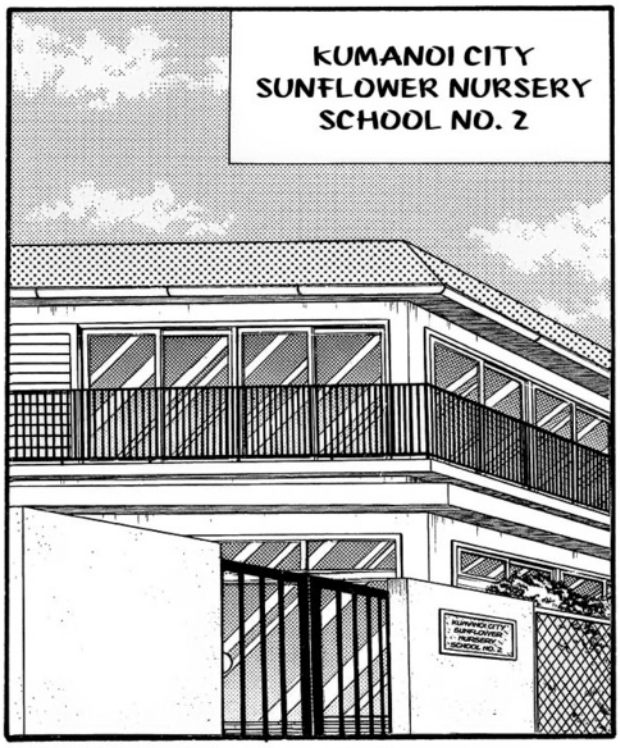
Chapter 94 / The End



Chapter 95

*Ultraman's battle cry.





THEIR BODY TEMPERATURES MUST BE HIGHER THAN OURS.

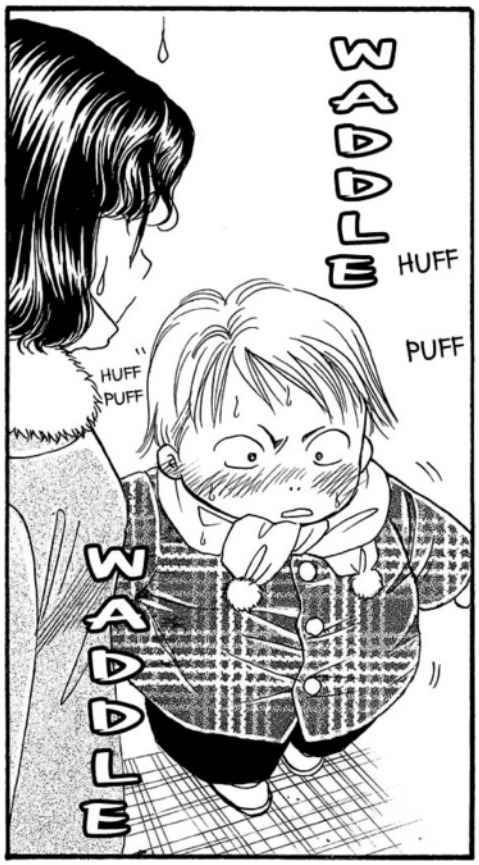
BUT THE CHILDREN DON'T SEEM TO MIND IT.

SHWOOO

JACK

JACK

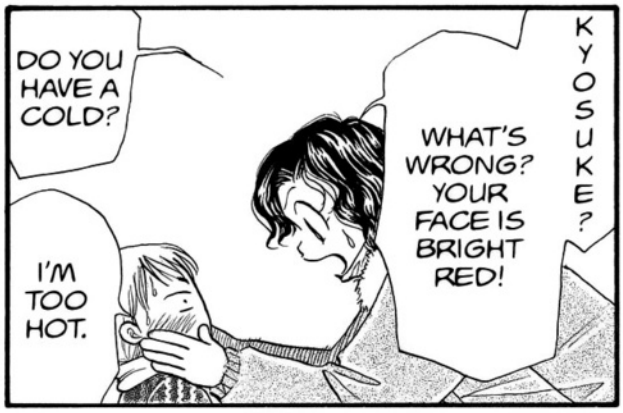
I'S HOME!
HEWO.
HI.
OH!
WELCOME HOME, DARLING!
EEEK!
OUR DAUGHTER IS IN A REBELLIOUS STAGE!
HMPH!
HMPH!
RIP
RIP
OH!
WHAP
HMPH!
WOW, YOU BROUGHT ME A PRESENT! I'LL COOK IT FOR DINNER!
HA!
MASA
LET'S GO INSIDE.
KLAP
OKAY! RECESS IS OVER!
KLAP
HELP ME CALM HIRO DOWN!!
DARLING! SON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
OKAY.
MINORU, LET'S DIG A TUNNEL!
SHUK
SHUK

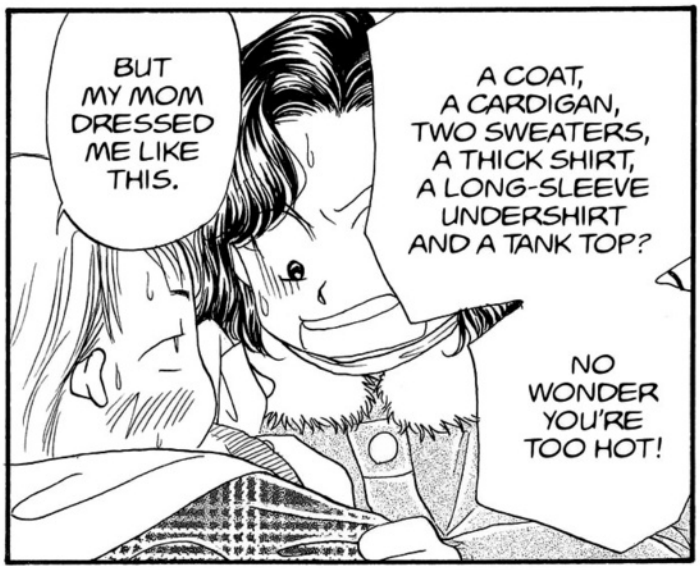

WADDLE
HUFF
PUFF
HUFF
PUFF
WADDLE

HUH?

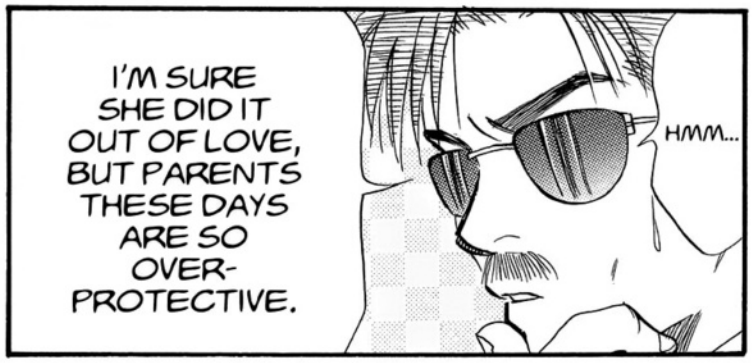
LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING.
YACK
BE CAREFUL NOT TO TRIP.
YACK
DID YOU WASH YOUR HANDS?
YAY

HUH?
KYOSUKE, HOW MANY LAYERS ARE YOU WEARING?


KYOSUKE?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOUR FACE IS BRIGHT RED!
DO YOU HAVE A COLD?
I'M TOO HOT.


A COAT, A CARDIGAN, TWO SWEATERS, A THICK SHIRT, A LONG-SLEEVE UNDERSHIRT AND A TANK TOP?
BUT MY MOM DRESSED ME LIKE THIS.
NO WONDER YOU'RE TOO HOT!

YOU'RE HOT? YOU MUST BE SICK.
COME INSIDE AND SIT DOWN.


I'M SURE SHE DID IT OUT OF LOVE, BUT PARENTS THESE DAYS ARE SO OVER-PROTECTIVE.
HMM...

OH?
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH, MR. MUKAI.
WELL, YOU SEE...

MR. MUKAI! STOP IT! THAT'S INAPPRO-PRIATE!
HA HA HA HA
OH, IT'S MINORU!
HEHE
HEHE

HEY.
WAP
WAP
MINORU

TELL HIM YOU'RE SORRY!
MR. MUKAI, DON'T SAY THAT! MINORU'S ONLY WEARING A COAT!
UBB...
THAT'S HIS NORMAL SHAPE!
HUH?
WHAT?
YEAH.
BRR
BRR

YOU LOOK CHUBBY.
HUH?
OH, MY! LOOK AT YOU, MINORU! YOU'RE WEARING TOO MANY LAYERS TOO!
PLUMP

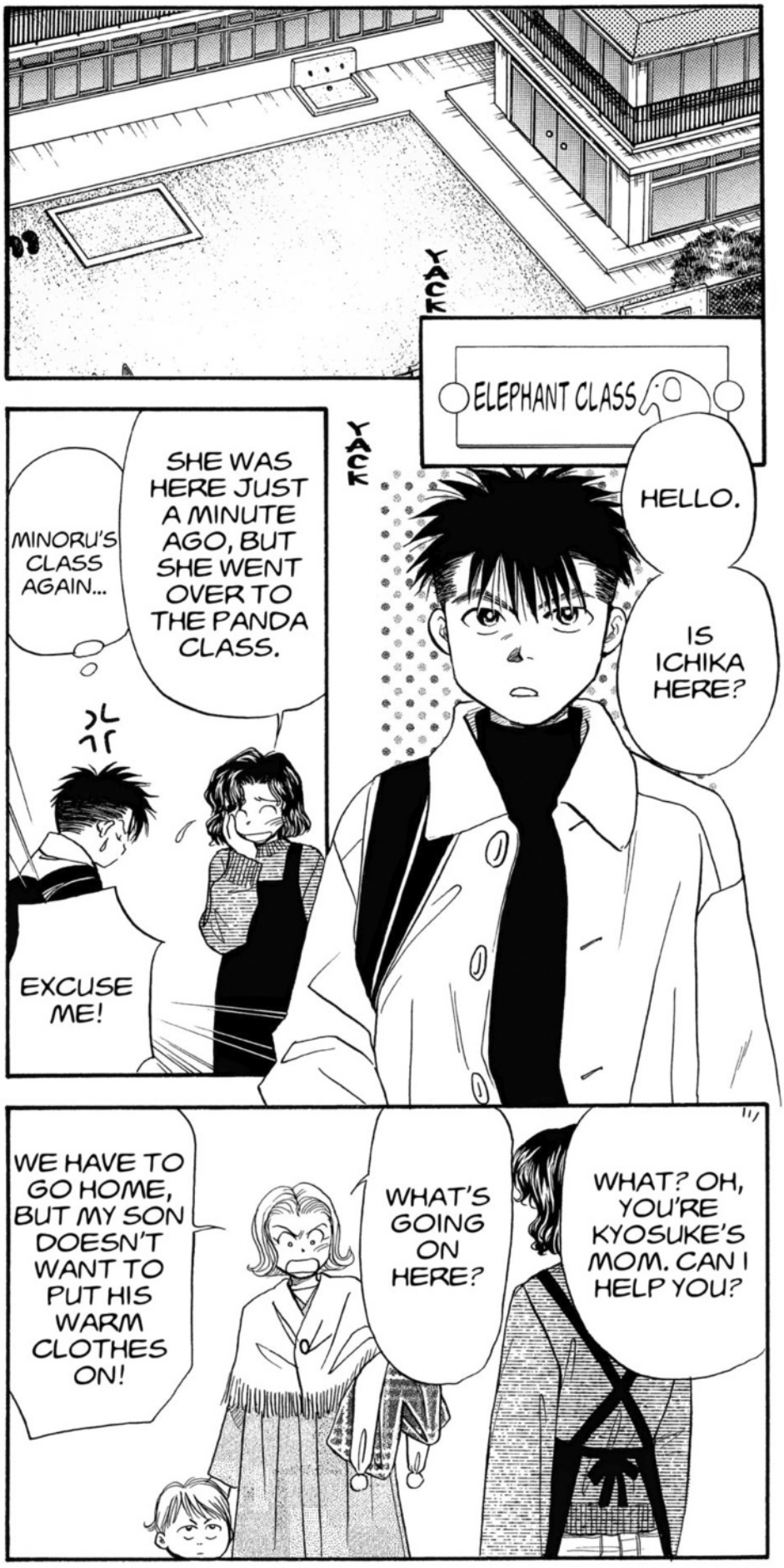
Author's Note Part 5

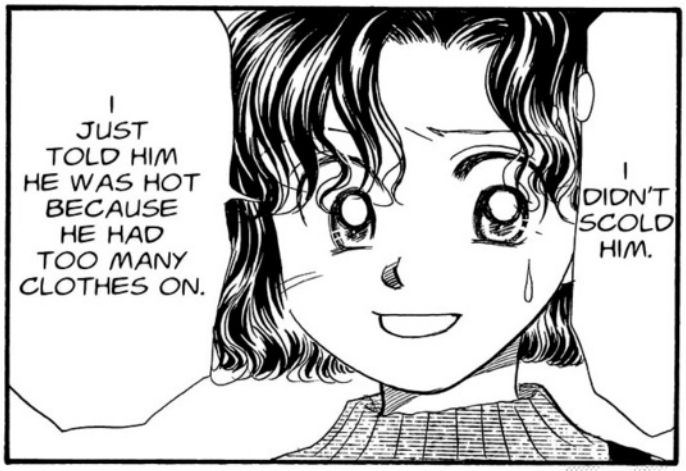
About three months ago, in March of 1997, I got to observe the post-recording of the final episode of the *Baby & Me* anime. It was wonderful! In fact, I wanted to go see it a lot sooner, but I couldn't because I'm so terrible at adjusting my work schedule. The post-recording process was amazing. The timing of the voice actors and the people doing the recording (are they called sound engineers?) was perfect! They showed me what professionalism really means!

I had my picture taken with all of them and got them to autograph it. It's hanging on my wall now.

I'd like to thank all the staff and voice actors! I appreciate all your hard work! ♡
Director Omori, thank you for the illustration of Snufkin!

(Snufkin is a character from the *Moomin* books by Finnish author Tove Jansson.)




I JUST TOLD HIM HE WAS HOT BECAUSE HE HAD TOO MANY CLOTHES ON.
I DIDN'T SCOLD HIM.

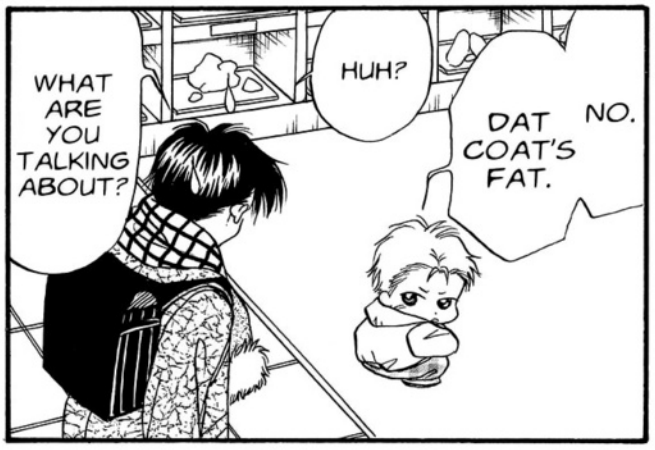
I ASKED HIM WHY AND HE SAID YOU SCOLDED HIM FOR WEARING THEM!

COME ON, MINORU...
PUT YOUR COAT ON.

AAH!!
OUR SON HAS A DELICATE CONSTI-TUTION!
YIKES! A HYSTERICAL WOMAN!
I-I'M SORRY.

GRMMMB
...

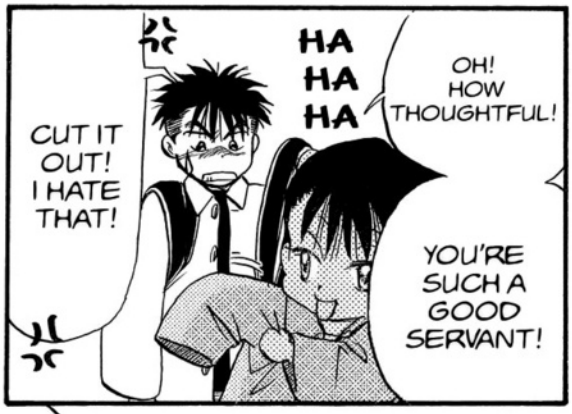
CHUBBY?
I KNOW. MINORU WAS WEARING HIS COAT EARLIER AND MR. MUKAI SAID HE LOOKED CHUBBY.


WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HUH?
NO.
DAT COAT'S FAT.

YAHOO! ICHIKA!
OH, AKIHIRO...
I KNEW I'D FIND YOU HERE.
HERE. I BROUGHT YOUR BAG.

TAKUYA, I DON'T THINK THAT'S GOING TO CHEER HIM UP.
C'MON, MINORU. YOU'RE CHUBBY WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR COAT.
NOPE.
UBB...

WHAT DID SHE DO?
REALLY?
SOME OVERPROTECTIVE MOTHER WAS YELLING AT THE TEACHERS IN THE ELEPHANT CLASSROOM.


CUT IT OUT! I HATE THAT!
HA HA HA
OH! HOW THOUGHTFUL!
YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD SERVANT!

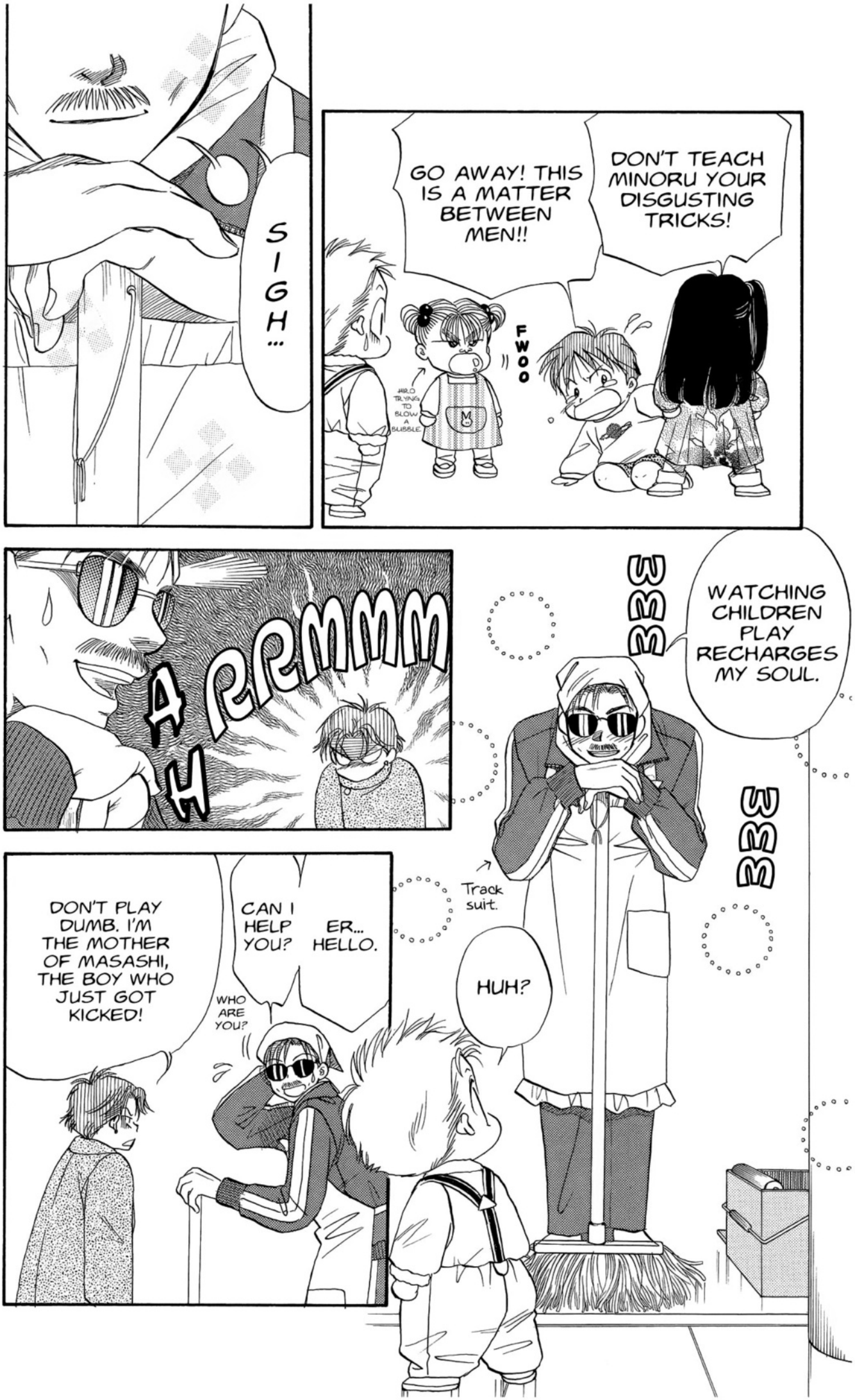
ZANG
WHAT?
HOW MANY LAYERS IS MINORU WEARING?
HUH?
BY THE WAY, ENOKI...
SHE MAKES HER SON WEAR ABOUT TEN LAYERS OF CLOTHES.

JUST TOOK A BATH
SNIK
SNIK
THAT CHILD'S MOTHER MUST'VE OVERDONE IT...
OH?
...IF A TEACHER THOUGHT IT WAS A PROBLEM.
MAYBE, BUT I THINK THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT HYGIENE.
REALLY? SHE MUST'VE TAKEN OFFENSE.
KREK
I COULD HEAR HER YELLING AT MR. MUKAI AS WE WERE LEAVING.
DAD'S NOT OVERPROTECTIVE, BUT HE IS DOTING.
WHAT CUTE LITTLE HANDS! ♡
OH!
SO CRITICAL
RUB
RUB
RUB
HOWEVER...
CUDDLE
CUDDLE
CUDDLE
YOUR FINGERNAILS ARE ALL DONE. SEE HOW NICE AND CLEAN THEY LOOK?
THERE, MINORU.
YEAH. ♡

HUH?
...THAT INCIDENT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING ...
...AND SOON OTHER PROBLEMS AROSE.
OH, THE TARP?
IT'S RIDICULOUS, ISN'T IT?
PANDA CLASS
TUCK
TUCK
WHY IS THERE A TARP OVER IT?
LOOK AT THE SANDBOX, GON.
WE UNDERSTAND THE PARENTS' CONCERNS BUT IT'S HARD TO HAVE A RATIONAL CONVERSATION WITH THEM...
NO.
THERE WAS NEVER A PROBLEM BEFORE.
BUT YOU HAVE THE KIDS WASH THEIR HANDS AFTER THEY PLAY, RIGHT?
...BECAUSE THEY GET SO WORKED UP.
THE SANDBOX HAS TO REMAIN COVERED EXCEPT DURING RECESS BECAUSE DOGS AND CATS MIGHT DO THEIR BUSINESS IN IT.
SIGH
AND THE SEESAWS AND SWINGS ARE OFF LIMITS TOO BECAUSE THEY SAY THEY'RE DANGEROUS.

I'M...
...AGAINST COVERING THE SANDBOX!
WAH!
YOU SCARED ME!
SUNLIGHT DRIES OUT THE SAND AND KILLS GERMS. BUT WITH THAT COVERING ON...
...THE SAND STAYS DAMP, ALLOWING MOLD AND BACTERIA TO GROW UNCHECKED!
FLUP
FLUP
MR. MUKAI, HAVE YOU LOST WEIGHT?
...
EVERY TIME THERE'S A PROBLEM HE STARTS MELTING AWAY.
SOME PARENTS WERE JUST COMPLAINING ABOUT THE WATER HERE.
IT'S NOT AS IF WE HAVE A WELL. WE USE THE SAME WATER EVERYONE ELSE USES.
SOB
SOB
THE HEALTH INSPECTOR GAVE US A GOOD GRADE!
BUT THEY WANT ME TO INSTALL WATER PURIFIERS ON ALL THE FAUCETS! WE'RE NOT A PRIVATE SCHOOL!
WE DRINK TAP WATER AT MY HOUSE.
WE DON'T HAVE THE MONEY...
SOB
SOB
BEFORE LONG, THEY'LL TELL US TO STERILIZE EVERYTHING IN THE SCHOOL!
I HATE THE SMELL OF DISINFECTANT.

KACK
KACK
GURGLE
FWOO
OH!
FWOOO
GURGLE
GURGLE
HUH?
CAN YOU BLOW A BUBBLE WITH YOUR SPIT?
HA HA HA! DID YOU SEE THAT, MINORU?
SWIP
GROSS!
GEEZ! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SWIP
PLOP
HAI-YA !!
THWAM


SIGH...
GO AWAY! THIS IS A MATTER BETWEEN MEN!!
DON'T TEACH MINORU YOUR DISGUSTING TRICKS!
FWOO
HIRO TRYING TO BLOW A BUBBLE.
AHEMMMM
WATCHING CHILDREN PLAY RECHARGES MY SOUL.
BBBB
BBBB
Track suit.
HUH?
CAN I HELP YOU?
ER... HELLO.
WHO ARE YOU?
DON'T PLAY DUMB. I'M THE MOTHER OF MASASHI, THE BOY WHO JUST GOT KICKED!

THEN GO ON AND TEACH THAT GIRL A LESSON!
I SHOULD'VE DONE SOMETHING. I'M SORRY.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

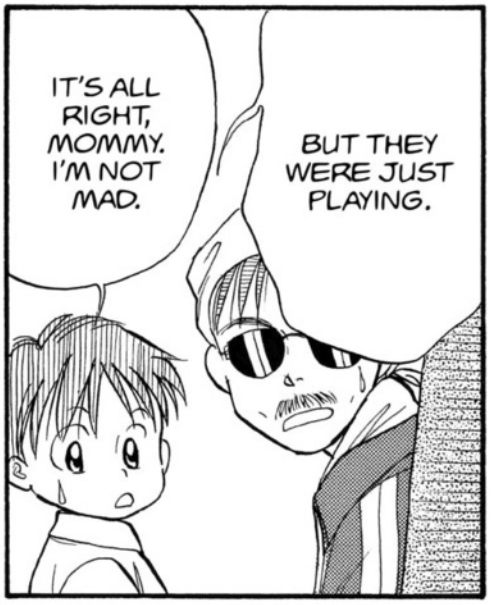
DO YOU JUST LET THESE CHILDREN BRUTALIZE EACH OTHER WITHOUT DOING ANYTHING?!
DON'T YOU CARE ABOUT MASASHI?

OH, YOU'RE MASA'S MOTHER?

HUH?
ARE YOU KIDDING?
SCOLD THAT GIRL PROPERLY!

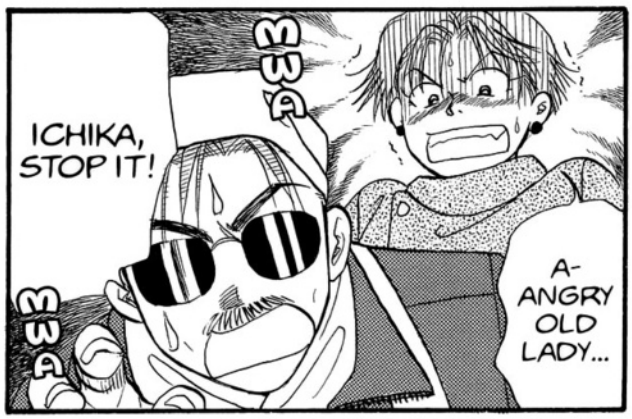
SHAKE HANDS AND MAKE UP.
WELL...ALL RIGHT. HOLD OUT YOUR HANDS, BOTH OF YOU.
GRASP

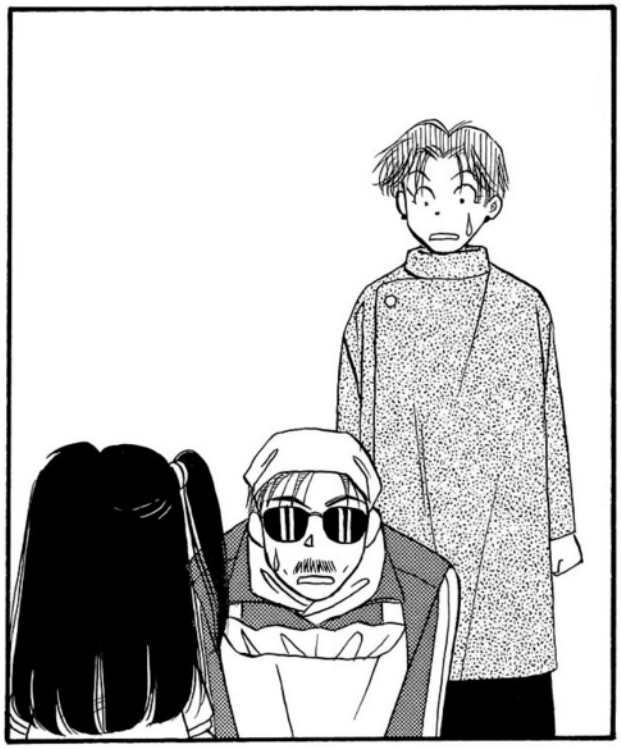
GRAH
...TO CULTIVATE COMPASSION AND SENSITIVITY!!
THIS IS NO WAY...

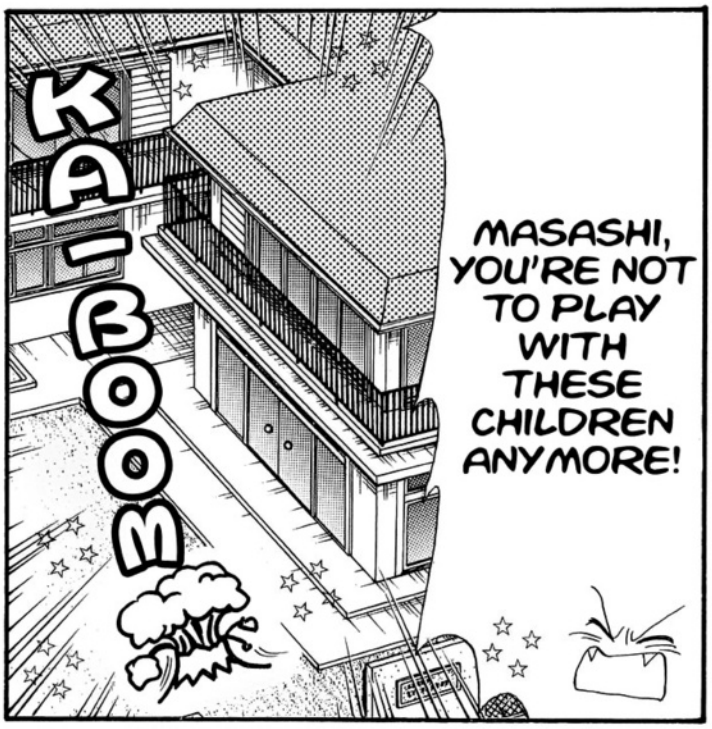

IT'S ALL RIGHT, MOMMY. I'M NOT MAD.
BUT THEY WERE JUST PLAYING.

I'LL NEVER APOLOGIZE!
WHAT?
YOU ANGRY OLD LADY!

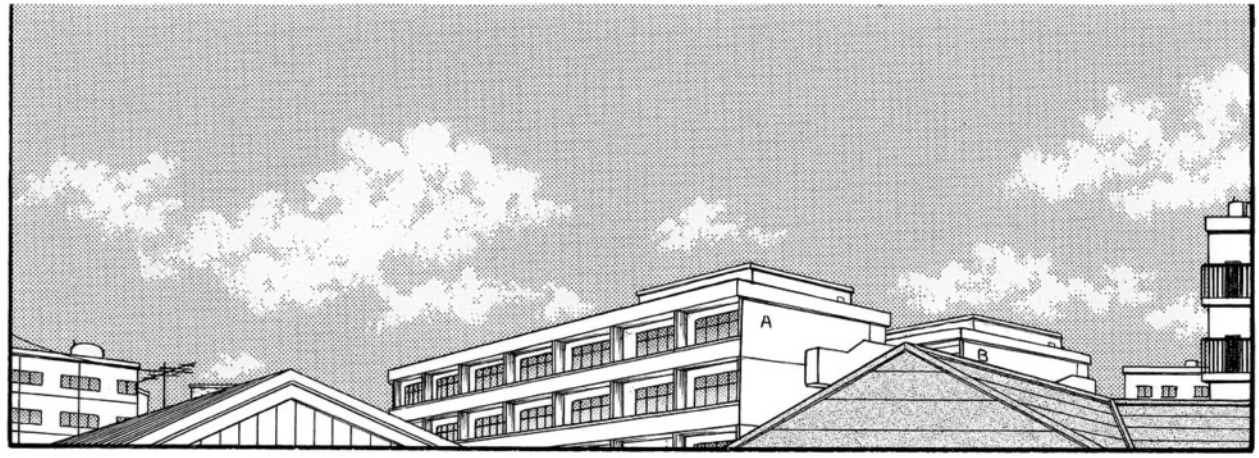
ZIP IT, YOU WITCH!


ICHIKA, STOP IT!
MWA
MWA
A-ANGRY OLD LADY...




KA-BOOM
MASASHI, YOU'RE NOT TO PLAY WITH THESE CHILDREN ANYMORE!

WA HA HA HA...
!!
KLAK
OWD WADY!
...AWAY GO...
KLAK
MINORU

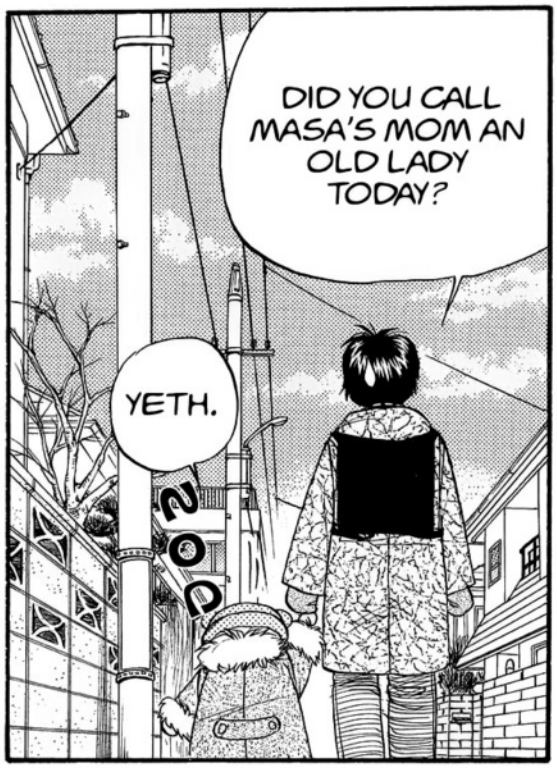

A
B

MINORU...

YEAH?

WAAH
I SOWEE, BWAZA!
DON'T APOLOGIZE TO ME.

THAT'S BAD!
YOU SHOULDN'T SAY THINGS LIKE THAT!
UBB...


DID YOU CALL MASA'S MOM AN OLD LADY TODAY?
YETH.
ZOOD

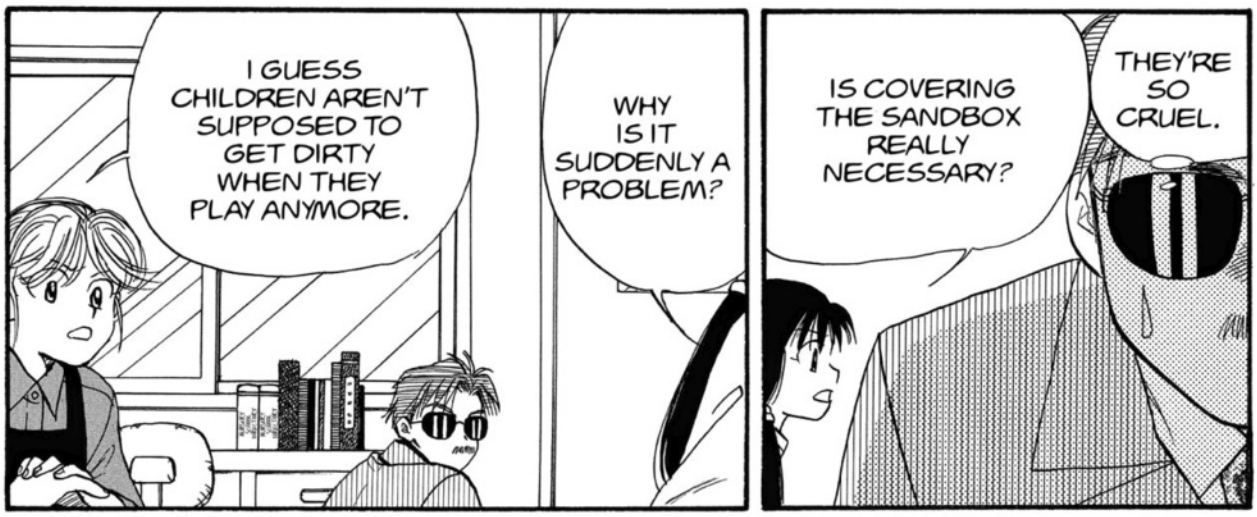
HE DOESN'T WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING.
UM...I WOVE WICE CAKES!

MINORU HIT MASA WITH A BLOCK ONE TIME, TOO.
KRAX
HIS MOTHER MUST THINK MINORU'S AN ANIMAL.
ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF AGO

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

THE NEXT DAY...
KUMANOI CITY SUNFLOWER NURSERY SCHOOL NO.2

IS IT JUST ME?
IT SEEMS LIKE WE'RE GETTING A LOT OF COMPLAINTS LATELY.
IT'S NOT JUST YOU, MR. MUKAI. THE PARENTS HAVE BEEN ON THE WARPATH LATELY.
MR. MUKAI, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PRETEND TO BE TALKING TO YOURSELF IN HERE.
WE KNOW THAT YOU WANT US TO LISTEN TO YOU.
...
YOU HAVE TO PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!

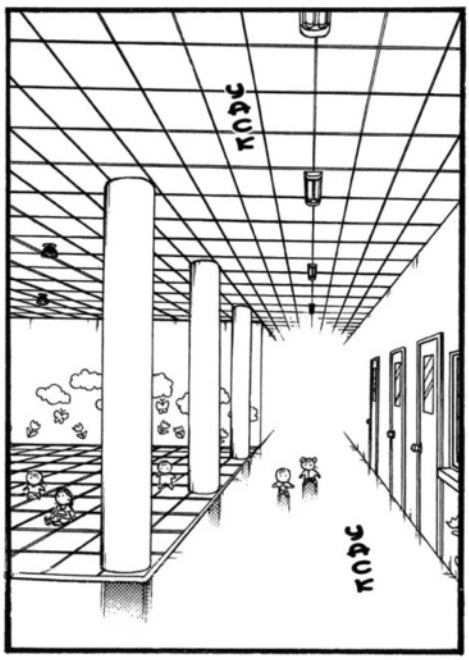

I GUESS CHILDREN AREN'T SUPPOSED TO GET DIRTY WHEN THEY PLAY ANYMORE.
WHY IS IT SUDDENLY A PROBLEM?

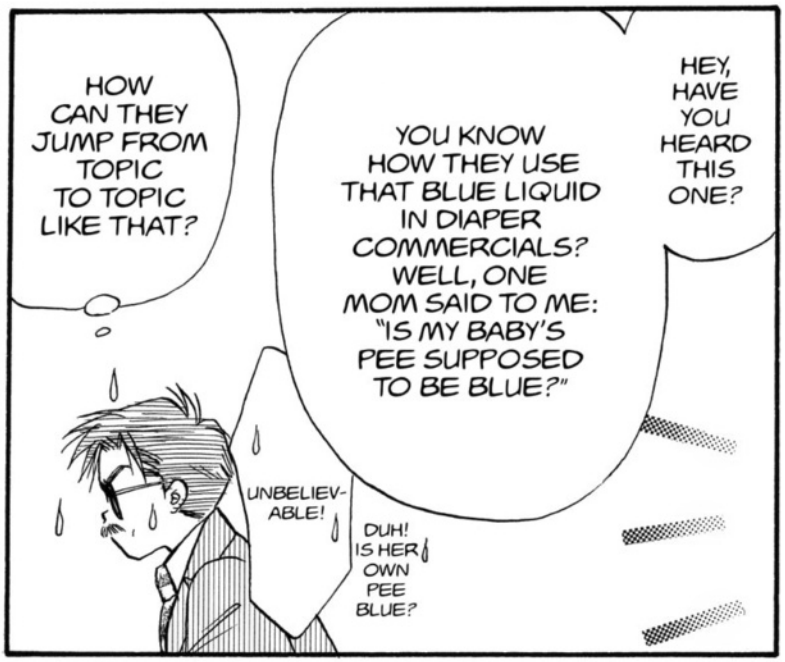
IS COVERING THE SANDBOX REALLY NECESSARY?
THEY'RE SO CRUEL.

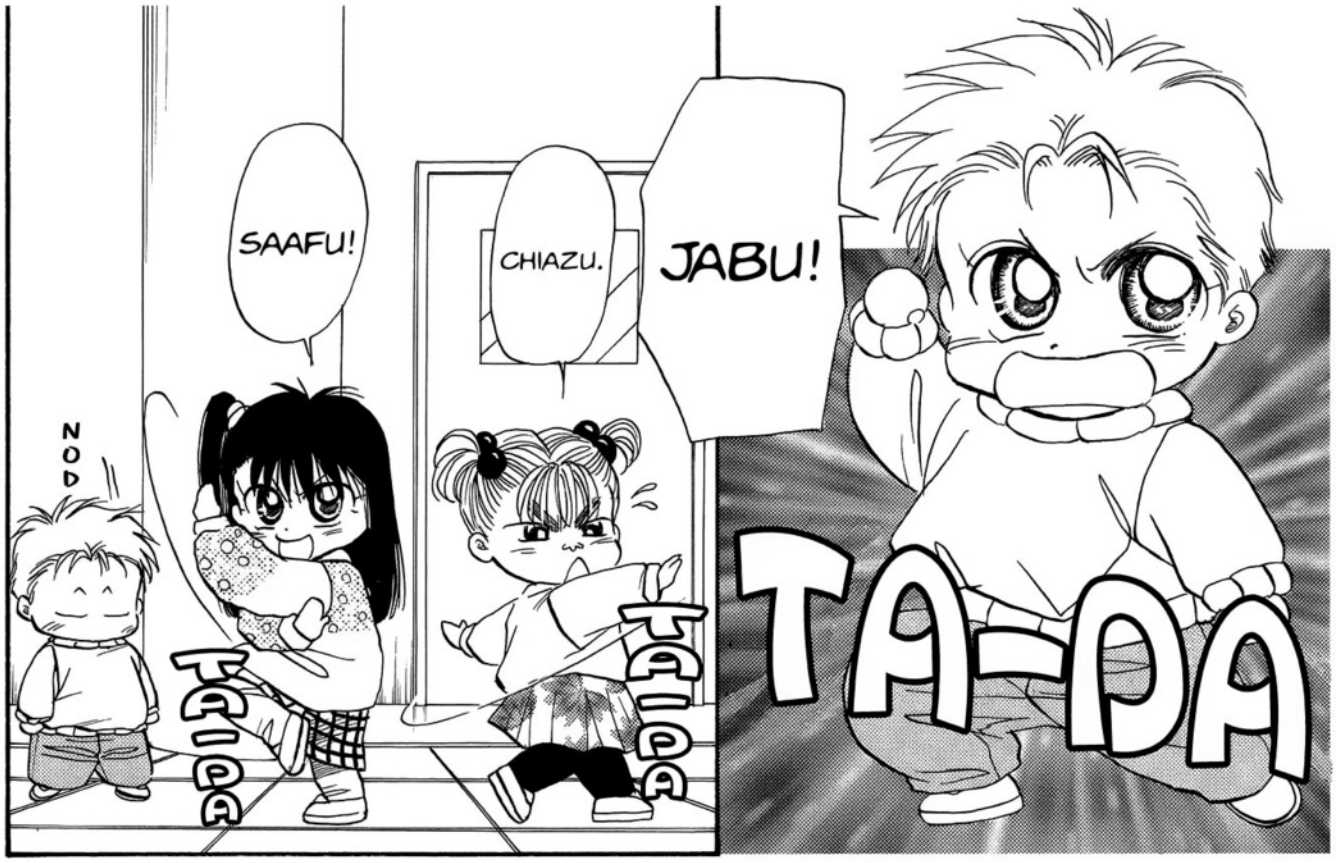
DID YOU KNOW THAT FORMULA COMES IN SINGLE-SERVING PACKAGES NOW?
I don't teach the infants, so that was news to me.
WE USED TO HAVE TO MIX IT OURSELVES.

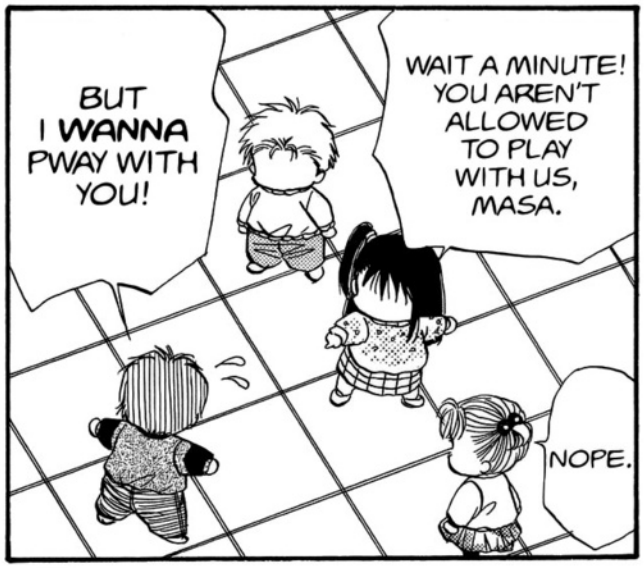
...WITH BUILT-IN KNEEPADS SO HE WOULDN'T GET HURT IF HE FELL DOWN. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?
AMAZING.

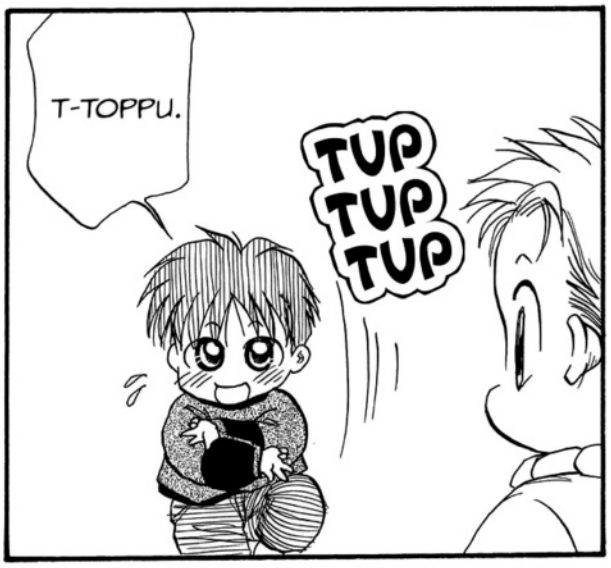
A KID IN MY CLASS WAS WEARING OVERALLS...
THEY WEAR EXPENSIVE BRAND NAMES!
EVEN THEIR CLOTHES ARE NICER NOWADAYS.

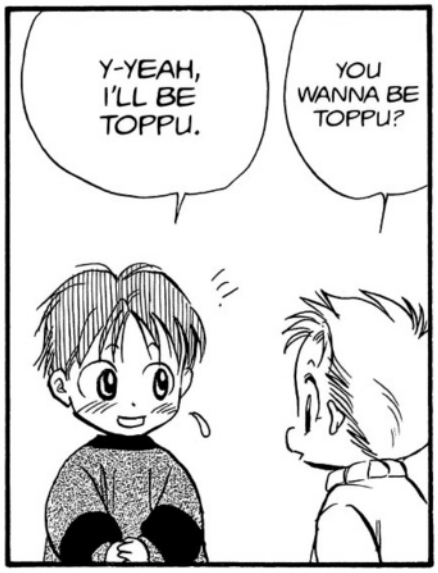

JACK
JACK

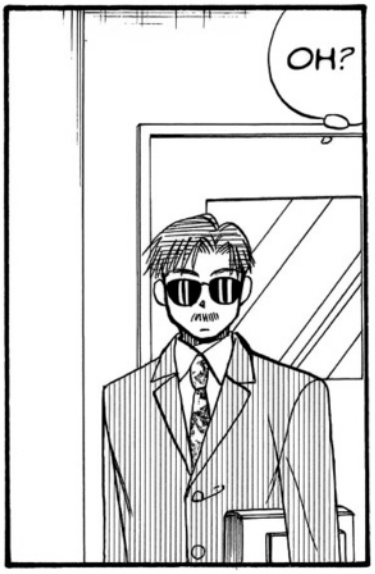

HOW CAN THEY JUMP FROM TOPIC TO TOPIC LIKE THAT?
YOU KNOW HOW THEY USE THAT BLUE LIQUID IN DIAPER COMMERCIALS? WELL, ONE MOM SAID TO ME: "IS MY BABY'S PEE SUPPOSED TO BE BLUE?"
HEY, HAVE YOU HEARD THIS ONE?
UNBELIEVABLE!
DUH! IS HER OWN PEE BLUE?


SAAFU!
CHIAZU.
JABU!
NOD
TAIPA
TAIPA
TA-PA

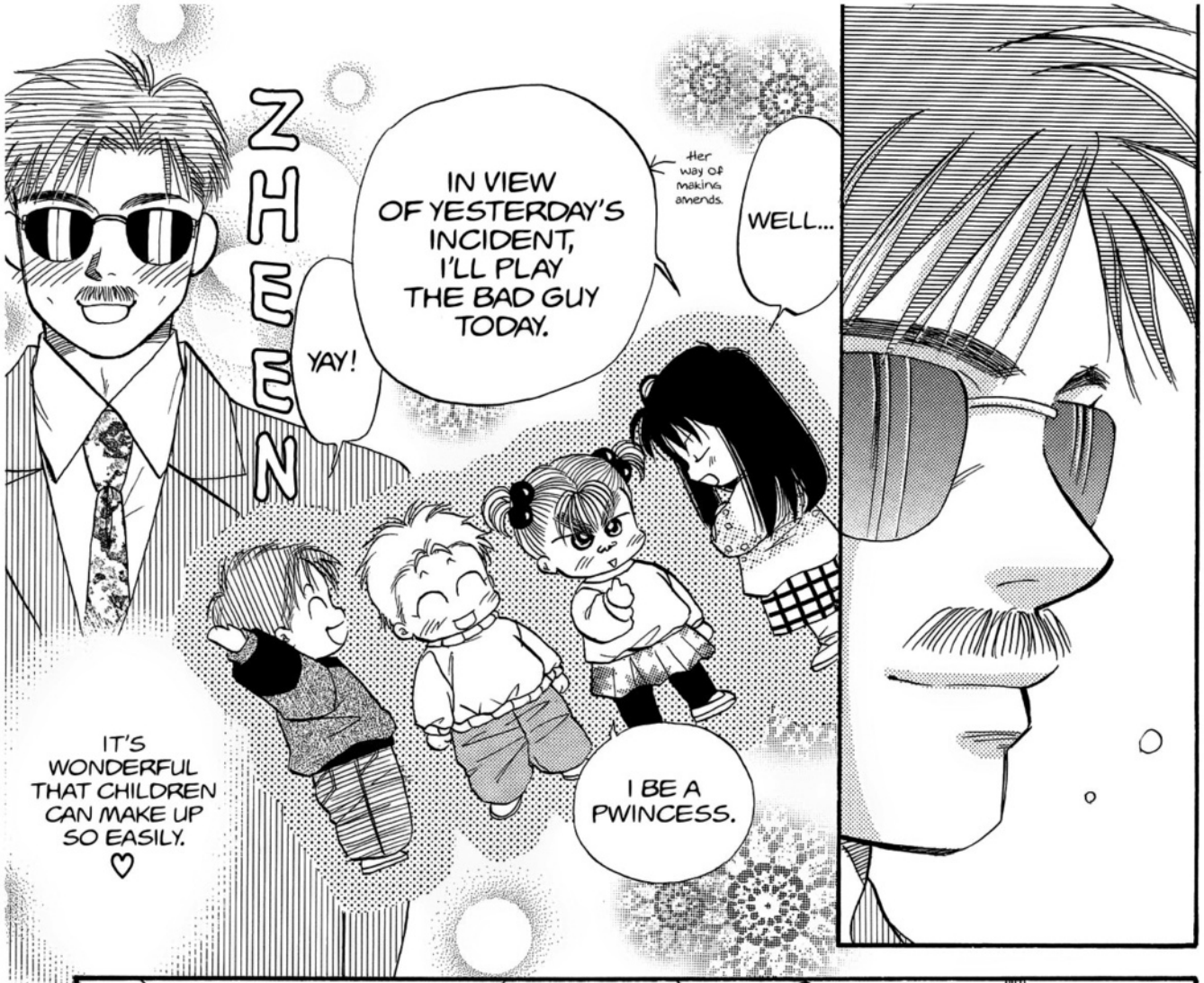

BUT I WANNA PWAY WITH YOU!
WAIT A MINUTE! YOU AREN'T ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH US, MASA.
NOPE.


T-TOPPU.
TUP TUP TUP


Y-YEAH, I'LL BE TOPPU.
YOU WANNA BE TOPPU?


OH?

...

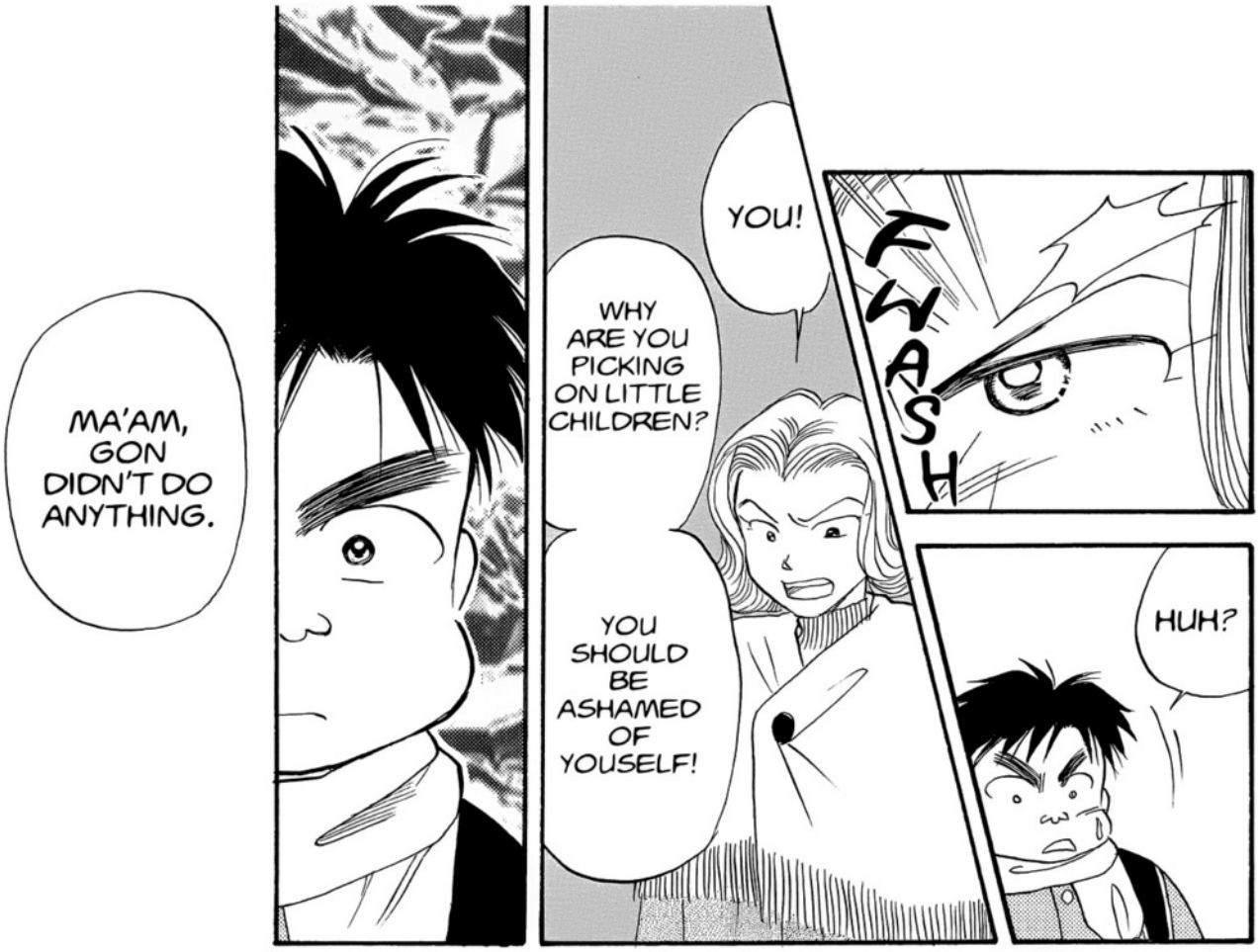

ZHEEEN
IN VIEW OF YESTERDAY'S INCIDENT, I'LL PLAY THE BAD GUY TODAY.
Her way of making amends.
WELL...
YAY!
I BE A PWINCESS.
IT'S WONDERFUL THAT CHILDREN CAN MAKE UP SO EASILY. ♡

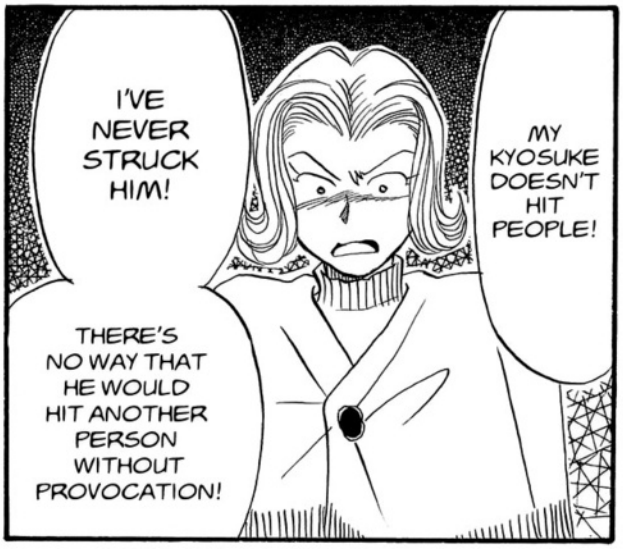
HEE HEE
HEE HEE
HEE HEE
MR. MUKAI IS LOOKING AT THE CHILDREN AND GRINNING AGAIN.
CREEPY.

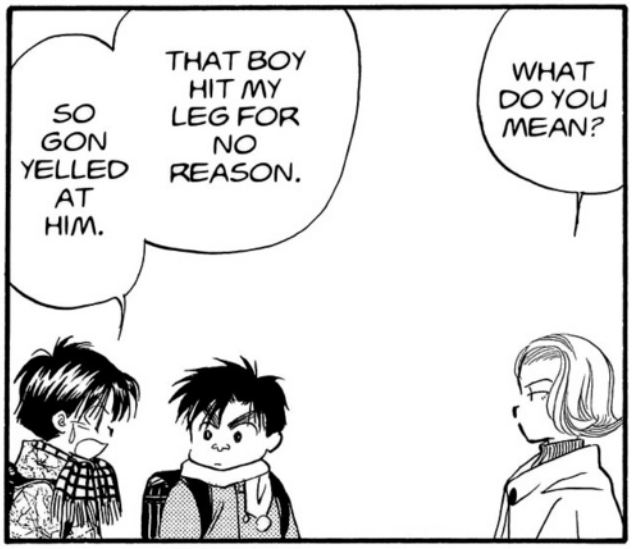
WANNA DO HOMEWORK TOGETHER, GON?
YACK
OKAY.
YOUR PLACE?
KLAK
SURE.
YACK

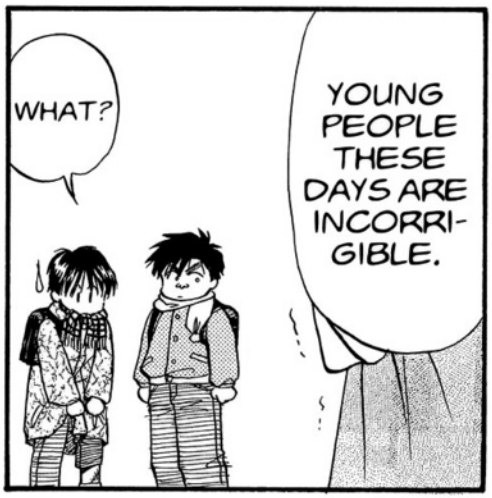
YACK
ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GROWN-UP WORLD ISN'T SO SIMPLE.
YACK

GLARE
WHAT'S WRONG?
WHO IS THIS KID?
WOOSH
HUH?
!
SWUP
OW!!
TAKUYA!
TWAK
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING!
MOMMY, THAT BIG KID IS BEING MEAN TO ME!
HEY, YOU!
WHAT DID YOU DO THAT FOR, YOU LITTLE PUNK?
TUP TUP TUP
OWW...


MA'AM, GON DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
YOU!
WHY ARE YOU PICKING ON LITTLE CHILDREN?
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOUSELF!
FWASH
HUH?


I'VE NEVER STRUCK HIM!
MY KYOSUKE DOESN'T HIT PEOPLE!
THERE'S NO WAY THAT HE WOULD HIT ANOTHER PERSON WITHOUT PROVOCATION!

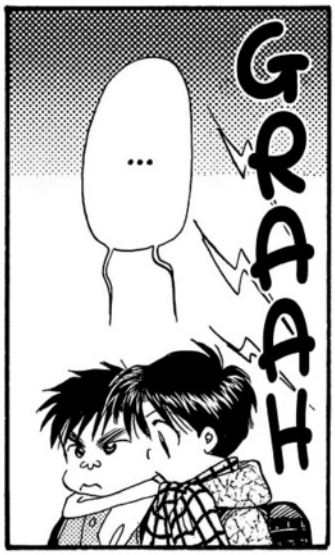

SO GON YELLED AT HIM.
THAT BOY HIT MY LEG FOR NO REASON.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

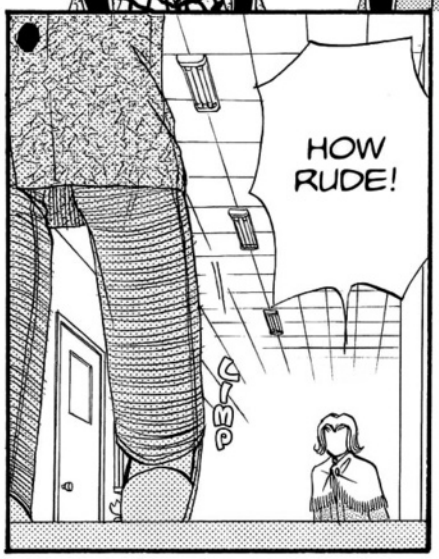

WHAT?
YOUNG PEOPLE THESE DAYS ARE INCORRIGIBLE.

LOOK. HE MADE THIS WELT.

ASK HIM YOURSELF.
WELL HE HIT ME.

IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MY SON! STOP MAKING UP STORIES TO GET OTHER PEOPLE IN TROUBLE!!
HOW DARE YOU TALK BACK TO ME?


GRAAH
...


HOW RUDE!
CLNP

HEY, YOU! APOLOGIZE!
LET'S GO.
TAKU-YA...

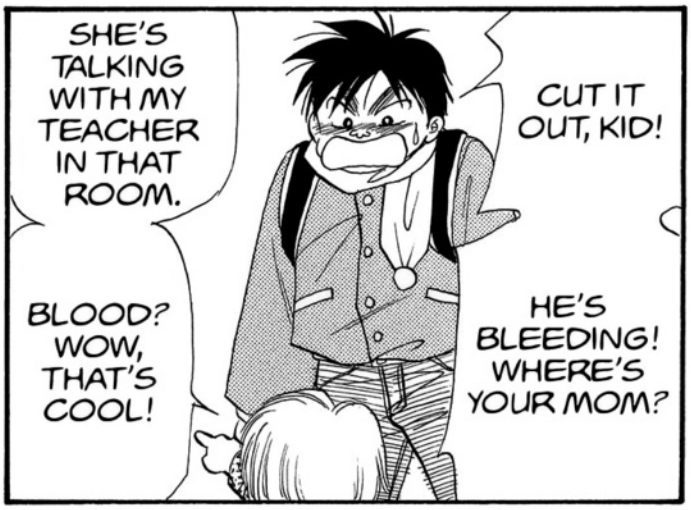
THEY'RE NOT USUALLY SO GROUCHY, THOUGH.
IF A GROWN-UP WON'T LISTEN TO ANYTHING WE HAVE TO SAY, THEN WHAT CAN WE DO?

...

MY DAD SAID ANGRY MOTHERS ARE DANGEROUS.

IT HURTS A LITTLE, BUT I'M OKAY.
THAT'S OKAY. HOW'S YOUR LEG?
...
SORRY I GOT YOU INTO THIS.
HUH?
GON ...
FWAP FWAP
FWAP FWAP
TAKU ...
OH!
IT'S TAKUYA AND HIS FRIEND!
THEY'RE GOING HOME!
...YA...
WHOOM

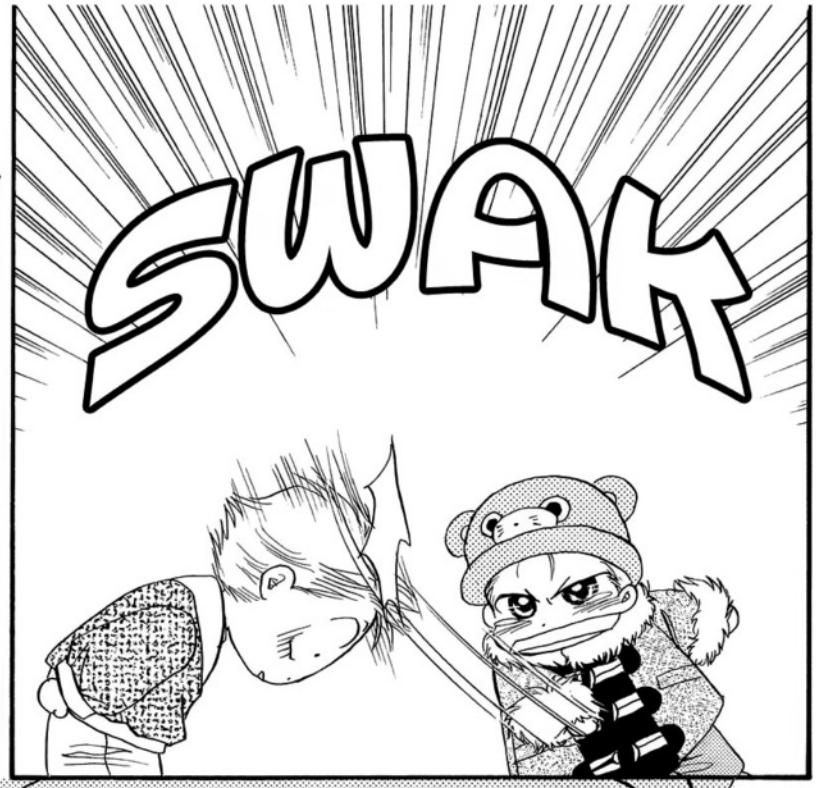
HEY! IT'S THAT BRAT AGAIN!
KRAK
BWAZA!
...
HEE HEE HEE
!!
WHAK


SHE'S TALKING WITH MY TEACHER IN THAT ROOM.
CUT IT OUT, KID!
BLOOD? WOW, THAT'S COOL!
HE'S BLEEDING! WHERE'S YOUR MOM?

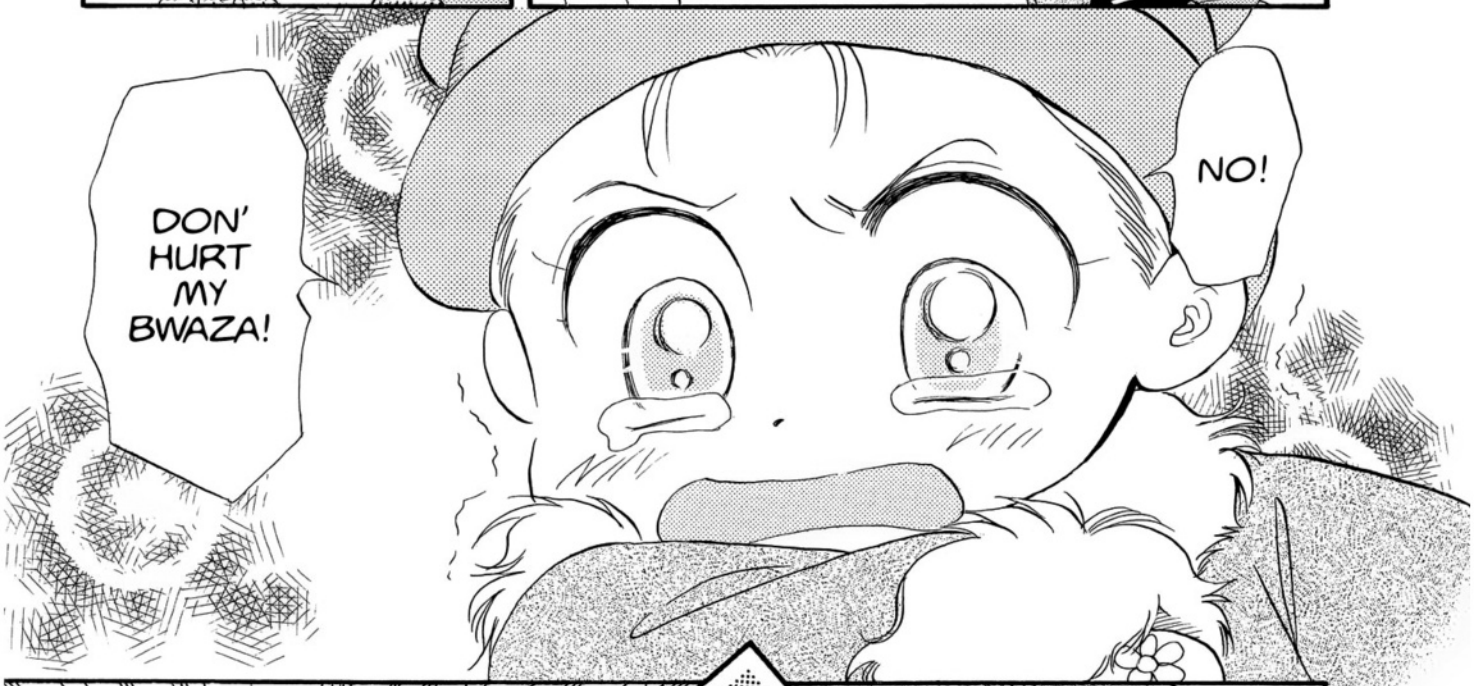
SLUK
HUH?

FWASH

IT'S BLOOD.
!!
ZANG


SWAK

WAAH!
UNH...

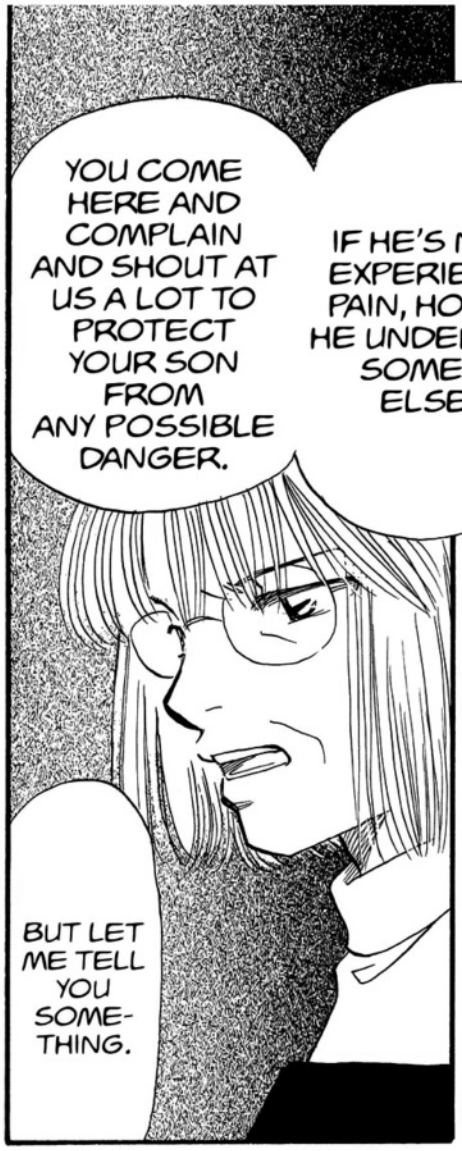

DON' HURT MY BWAZA!
NO!

SLAM
AAAAH
OH!
KYO-SUKE?

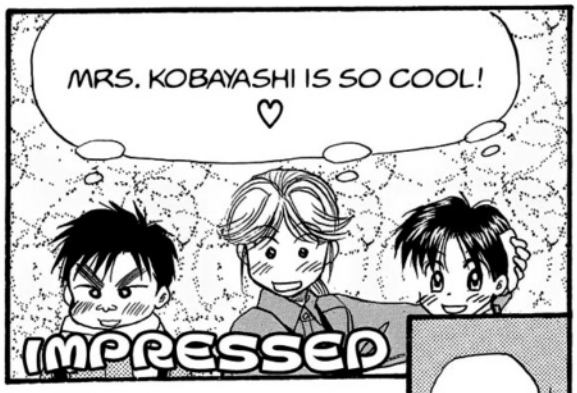
MINORU...

CAN'T YOU FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED ...
... BEFORE YOU LOSE YOUR TEMPER?
WHAT HAPPENED? HE HIT MY SON!!
WAIT A SECOND!
THE TEACHER WHO WAS LISTENING TO HER COMPLAINTS.
HE DID WHAT?
THAT BOY HIT ME!!
THROB
THROB
WAAH
...
TAKUYA! YOU'RE BLEEDING!
WE'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF THAT!
ARE YOU GOING TO OVERLOOK THAT?
BEFORE THAT, YOUR SON THREW A TOY CAR...
...AT ANOTHER BOY FOR NO REASON.
HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ABOUT PAIN OR DANGER.
I SEE...
THAT EXPLAINS IT.
AND I'VE NEVER LET HIM DO ANYTHING DANGEROUS!
KYOSUKE WOULD NEVER DO SUCH A THING! I'VE NEVER HIT HIM!

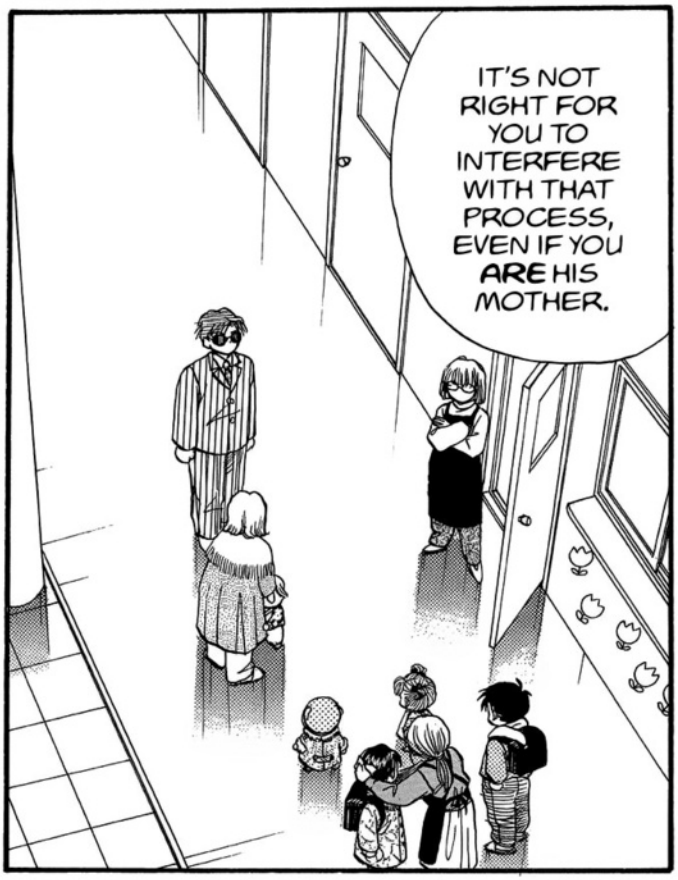
CHILDREN LEARN BY EXPERIENCING LIFE, BY DOING AND SEEING NEW THINGS.
THEY HAVE AN INCREDIBLE ABILITY TO LEARN.


YOU COME HERE AND COMPLAIN AND SHOUT AT US A LOT TO PROTECT YOUR SON FROM ANY POSSIBLE DANGER.
IF HE'S NEVER EXPERIENCED PAIN, HOW CAN HE UNDERSTAND SOMEONE ELSE'S?
BUT LET ME TELL YOU SOME-THING.

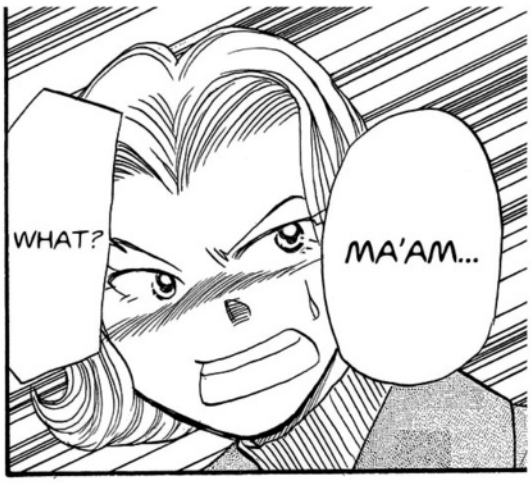
MRS. KOBAYASHI ...
WHAT?


MRS. KOBAYASHI IS SO COOL! ♡
IMPRESSED

Y...
IT'S LIKE TALKING TO THE WALL.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS NURSERY SCHOOL?
YOU CAN'T TELL ME HOW TO RAISE MY SON!

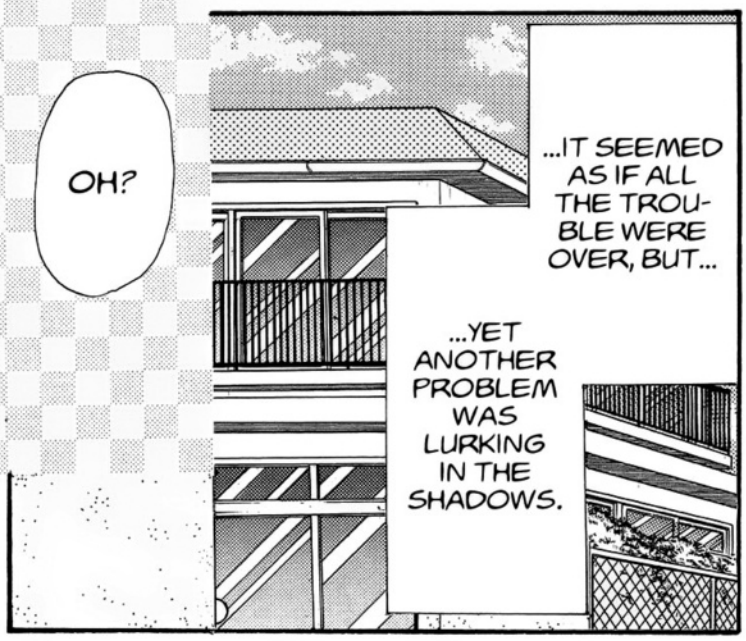

IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR YOU TO INTERFERE WITH THAT PROCESS, EVEN IF YOU ARE HIS MOTHER.

OUR GOAL IS TO NURTURE HEALTHY MINDS AND BODIES.
WE HOPE TO FOSTER KINDNESS AND CONFIDENCE IN THEM.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, I RECOMEND YOU TRY A DIFFERENT NURSERY SCHOOL.


WHAT?
MA'AM...

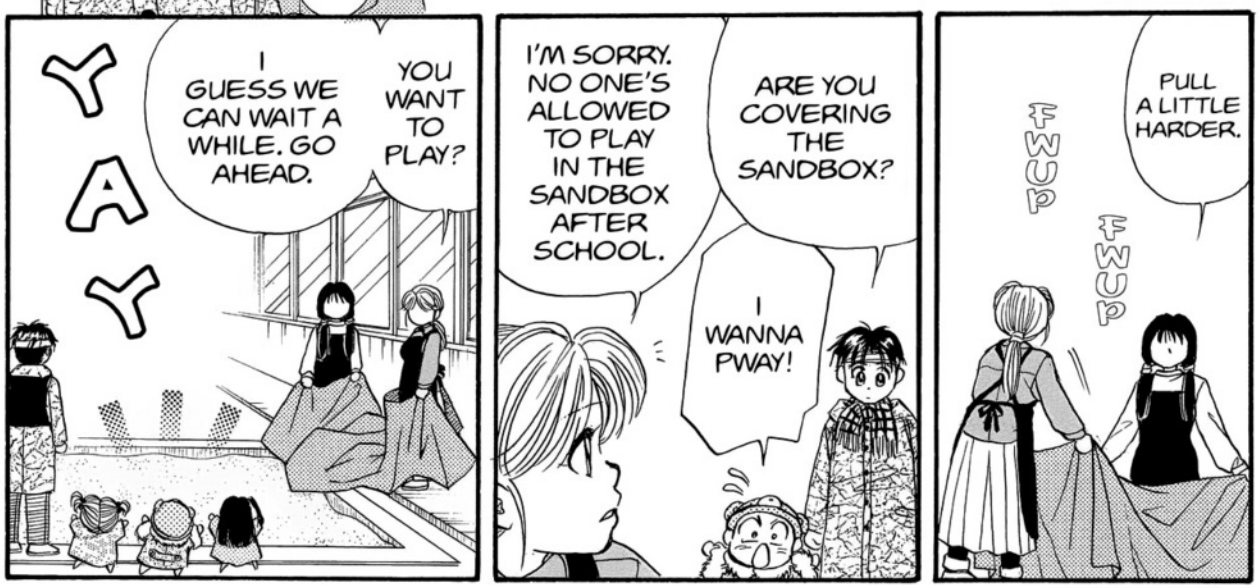
WE...
...DON'T WANT THE CHILDREN WE CARE FOR TO BE MADE TO FEEL FRAGILE AND FEARFUL.

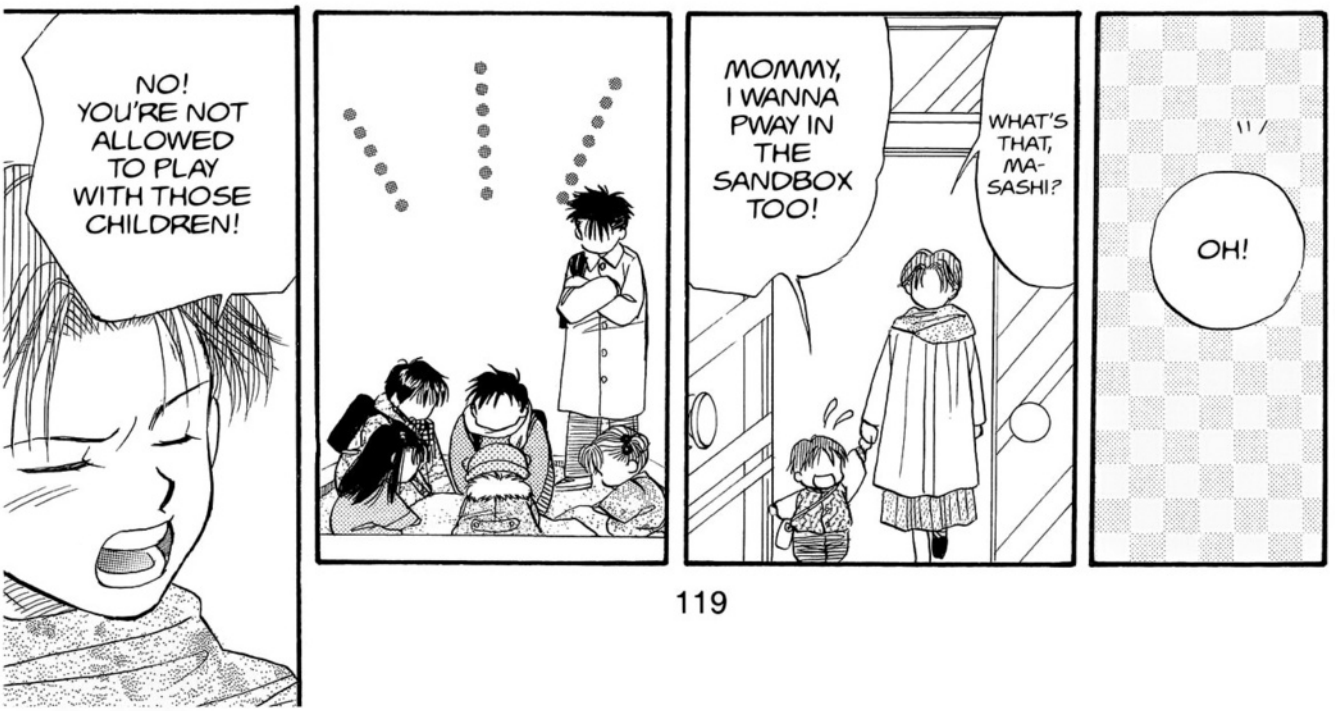
I...
RRR
RRR
I WOULDN'T BRING MY SON BACK HERE IF YOU PAID ME! GOOD-BYE!!
GRAH
TOMP
TOMP
TOMP
TOMP


OH?
...IT SEEMED AS IF ALL THE TROUBLE WERE OVER, BUT...
...YET ANOTHER PROBLEM WAS LURKING IN THE SHADOWS.

SLAM
I'M WORRIED ABOUT KYOSUKE.
AT FIRST ...

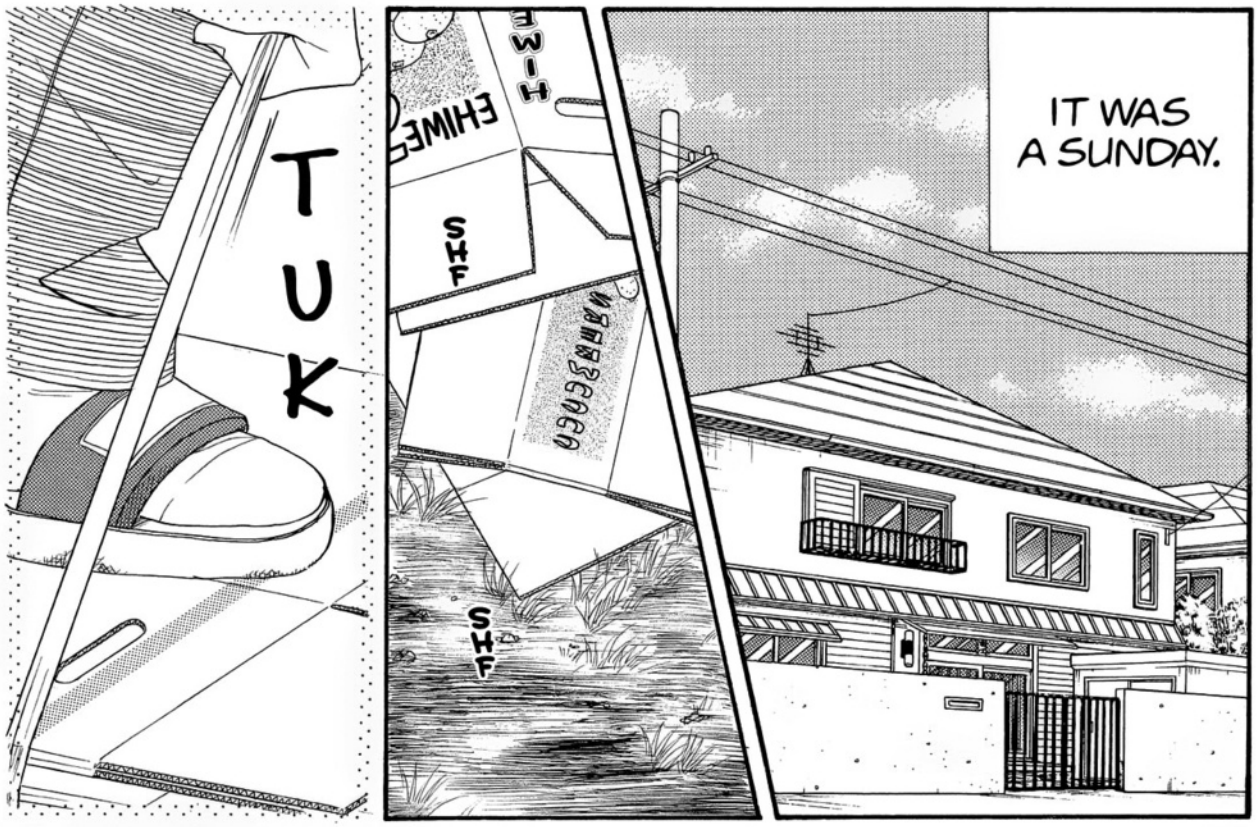
ENOKI...
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HEAD?
?
OH, THIS? IT'S NOTHING.
MINORU, LET'S WALK HOME TOGETHER!
OKAY.
KREEK
HUH?


PULL A LITTLE HARDER.
FWUP
FWUP
ARE YOU COVERING THE SANDBOX?
I'M SORRY. NO ONE'S ALLOWED TO PLAY IN THE SANDBOX AFTER SCHOOL.
I WANNA PWAY!
YOU WANT TO PLAY?
I GUESS WE CAN WAIT A WHILE. GO AHEAD.
YAY


OH!
WHAT'S THAT, MA-SASHI?
MOMMY, I WANNA PWAY IN THE SANDBOX TOO!
NO! YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO PLAY WITH THOSE CHILDREN!

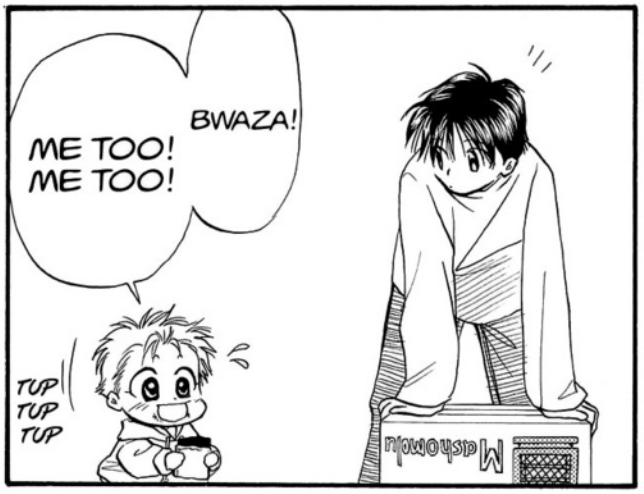
Chapter 95 / The End

Chapter 96


TUK
SHF
SHF
IT WAS A SUNDAY.

SURE.
WOULD YOU BREAK THEM DOWN FOR ME?
GREAT.

HERE ARE THE OLD BOXES FROM THE CLOSET.
DAD...
KUSU-JU
KUSU-JU
ELECTRIC HEATER


ME TOO! ME TOO!
BWAZA!
TUP TUP TUP

CHOCOLATE
...
HE'S A MESS.
THERE AREN'T VERY MANY. JUST WATCH ME DO IT THIS TIME, OKAY?
OKAY.
SHUK
ELECTRIC HEATER
!
HUH?
BWAZA!
THERE.
FWAP
PLASTIC CASE WITH
LIFT
SHOOK

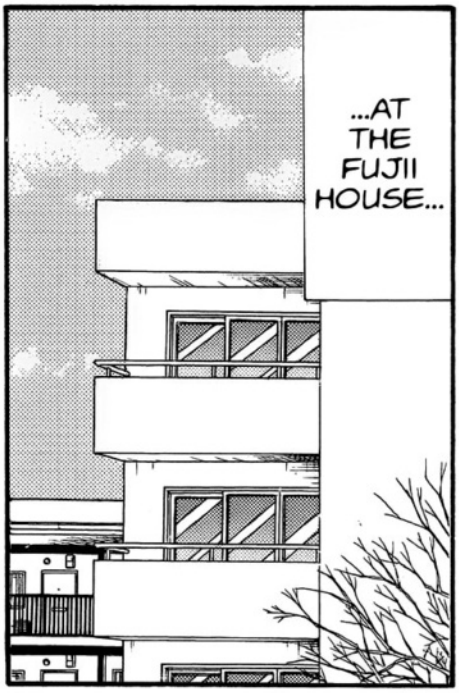
GRR
NO SPECIAL REASON ...
HA! ♡
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WAP WAP WAP WAP
AAH!!
TAKE THAT!
AND THAT!
WAP WAP WAP WAP
IT'S LIKE A CARDBOARD DRUM.
YOU LIKED TO PLAY WITH CARD-BOARD BOXES TOO.
THIS REMINDS ME OF WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE, TAKUYA.
WHAT?
YES.
I DID?
MINORU KEEPS DISTRACT-ING ME.
A HOUSE MADE OF CARD-BOARD?
HUH? WHAT'S THIS?

Author's Note Part 6

I worked on Chapter 94 during the special year-end schedule.
At the end of the year, we have to finish our manuscripts earlier than usual before the presses and editorial departments close for New Year's.
This puts a lot of pressure on us manga artists.
There are special schedules for Golden Week and Obon as well.*
The hardest thing about Chapter 94 was drawing the costumes that appear in Takuya's dream. People don't think my drawings are very hard to do because they're so simple, but I was on a tight deadline. My editor was hovering over me, waiting for the manuscript to be finished. So I just didn't have time to research costumes.
I hope you understand.
Waah!
Anyway, I hate these special holiday schedules!
Manga artists need breaks too! At least for New Year's, please!

*New Year's, Golden Week and Obon are Japan's three biggest holiday seasons, during which businesses close for a full week.

*In Japan, people with type A blood are thought to be very sensible.



MEAN-WHILE, ICHIKA WAS ON ANOTHER MISSION.
WELL, I'LL BE WORK-ING ON MY SCRIPTS.
I HAVE A DATE.
ALL RIGHT ...
GUESS I'LL DO THE DISHES.
WAAH! YOU'RE SO MEAN! DON'T RUN AWAY!
Ignoring her
FATHER AWAY ON BUSINESS AKIHIRO IN HIS ROOM
TMP TMP TMP
TODAY IS...
...MY BIRTHDAY...
SHEEN
MY MILK BREAD
WHAT IS IT, ICHIKA?
WE'RE UP AGAINST IT, MA-BO! WE'LL HAVE TO FORCE OUR WAY THROUGH THE ENEMY LINES AND ACCOMPLISH THIS MISSION WITHOUT SUPPORT!!
WAIT, ICHIKA!
WHAT ARE YOU DRAG-GING MA-BO INTO NOW?
TUP TUP TUP
MA-BO !!
ZANG

CHAK
CHA-RA-RA CHING CHING

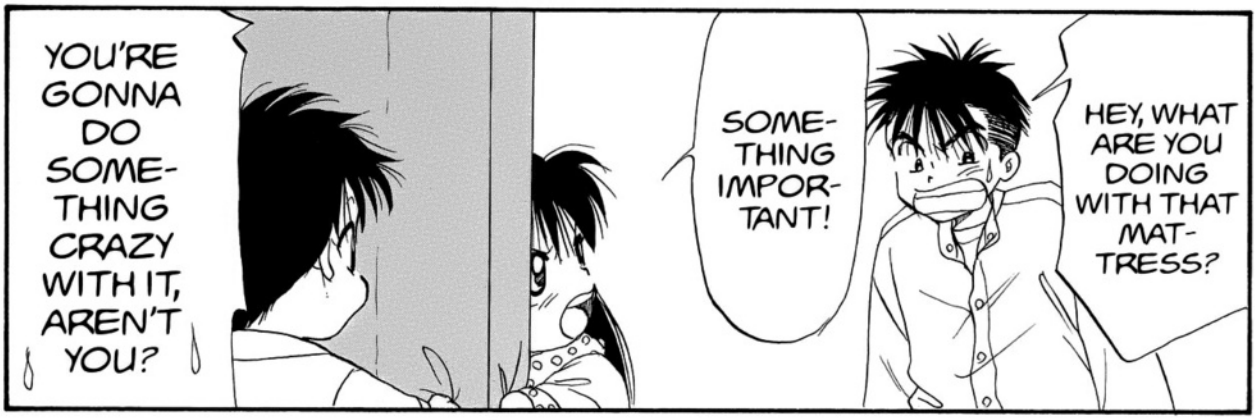
BEEP
BEEP

MA-BO, ARE YOU ICHIKA'S DOG?
...
STOP SAYING MEAN THINGS! I'M PLAYING WITH HIM NICELY!
WE'RE JUST PWAYING.

SHUNK
ICHIKA
MA-BO

HEWE WE GO.
HERE WE GO.
HEY?

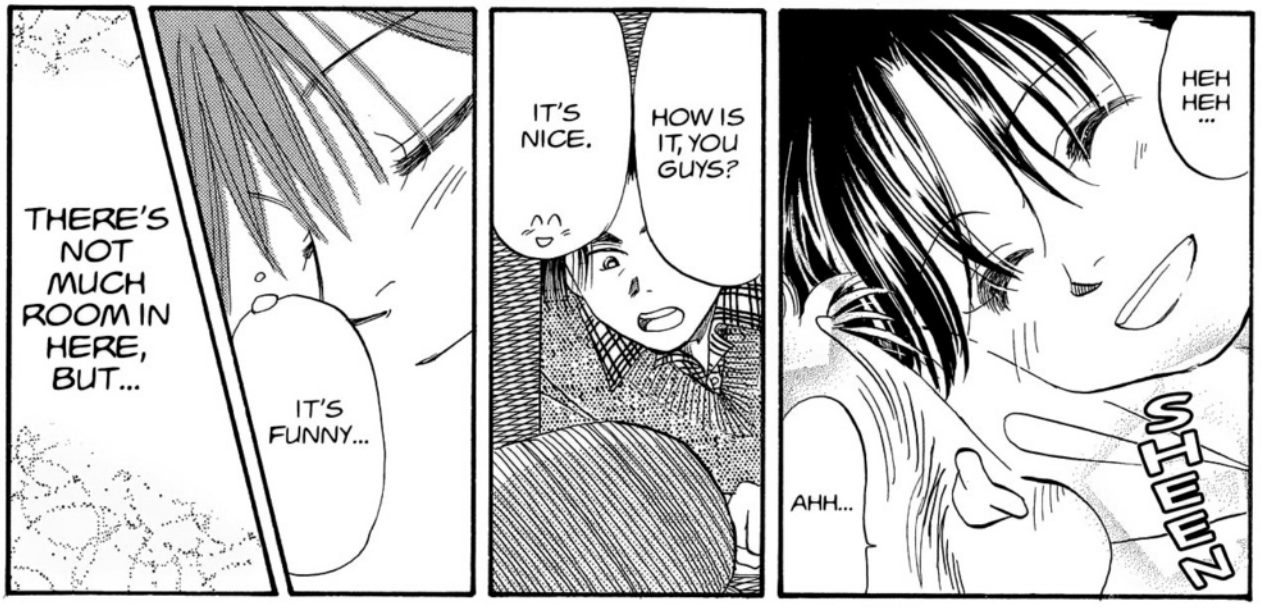
HUH? WHAT IS IT?
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU!
CHA-RA-RA CHING CHING

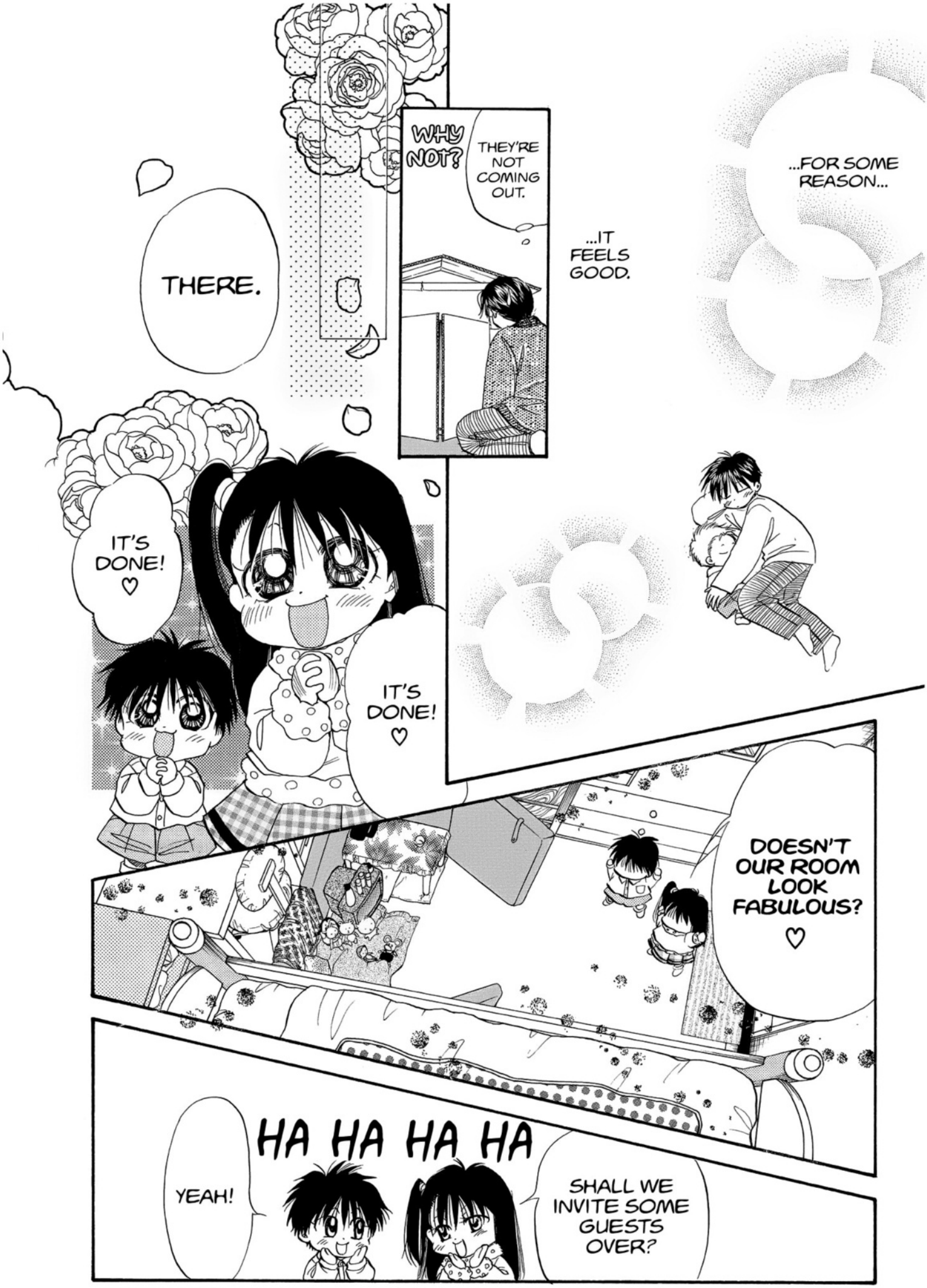

YOU'RE GONNA DO SOME-THING CRAZY WITH IT, AREN'T YOU?
SOME-THING IMPOR-TANT!
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT MAT-TRESS?

KLAK
INVITE?
DON'T WORRY! IT'S NOT CRAZY AT ALL!
HEE
I'LL INVITE YOU IN WHEN IT'S FINISHED PROPERLY. ♡
THWAP
THERE.
YOUR HOUSE IS READY!
WOW!
GO IN-SIDE.
YAY!
WELL ... THANKS, DAD.
SANK YOU!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

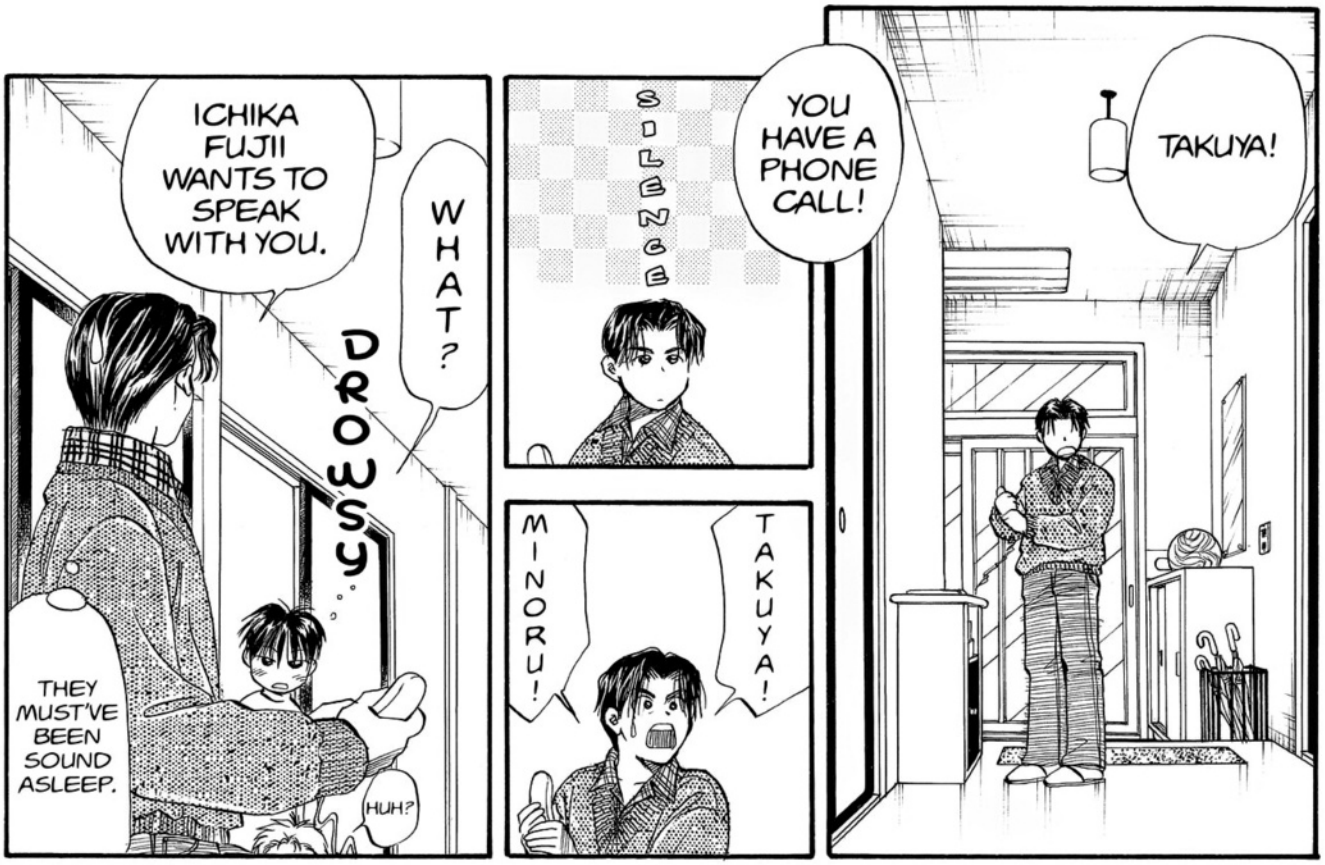
THE CEILING IS RIGHT ABOVE ME.
POTATOES
ORANGES
IT'S ROOMIER THAN IT LOOKS.
AMA-JING!
BLISS
DON'T LIE IN THE MIDDLE, MINORU.
Move over a little.
THUMP
TAKUYA LIES DOWN TOO.

SHEEZ

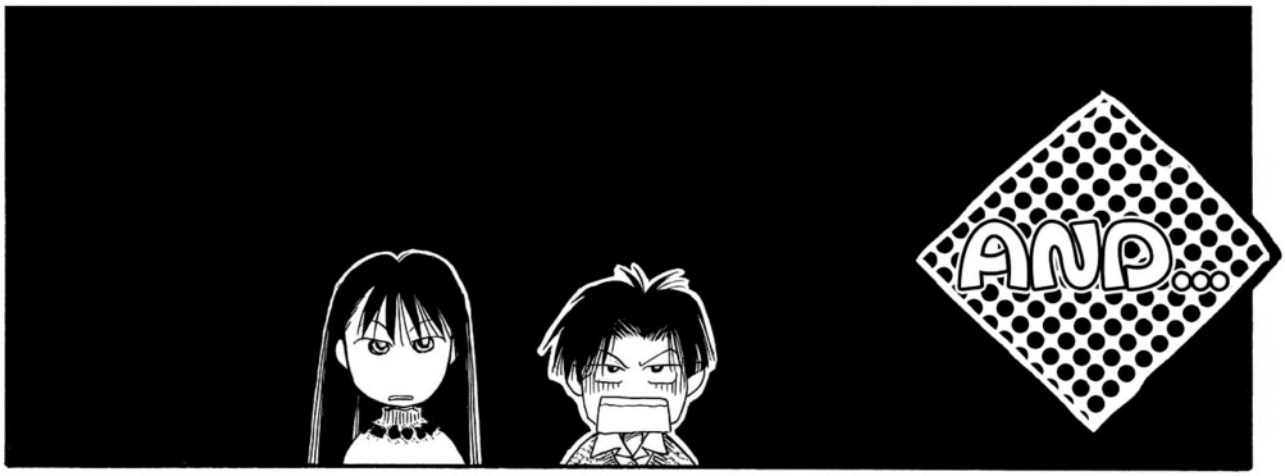

HEH HEH ...
SHEEZ
AHH...
HOW IS IT, YOU GUYS?
IT'S NICE.
IT'S FUNNY...
THERE'S NOT MUCH ROOM IN HERE, BUT...

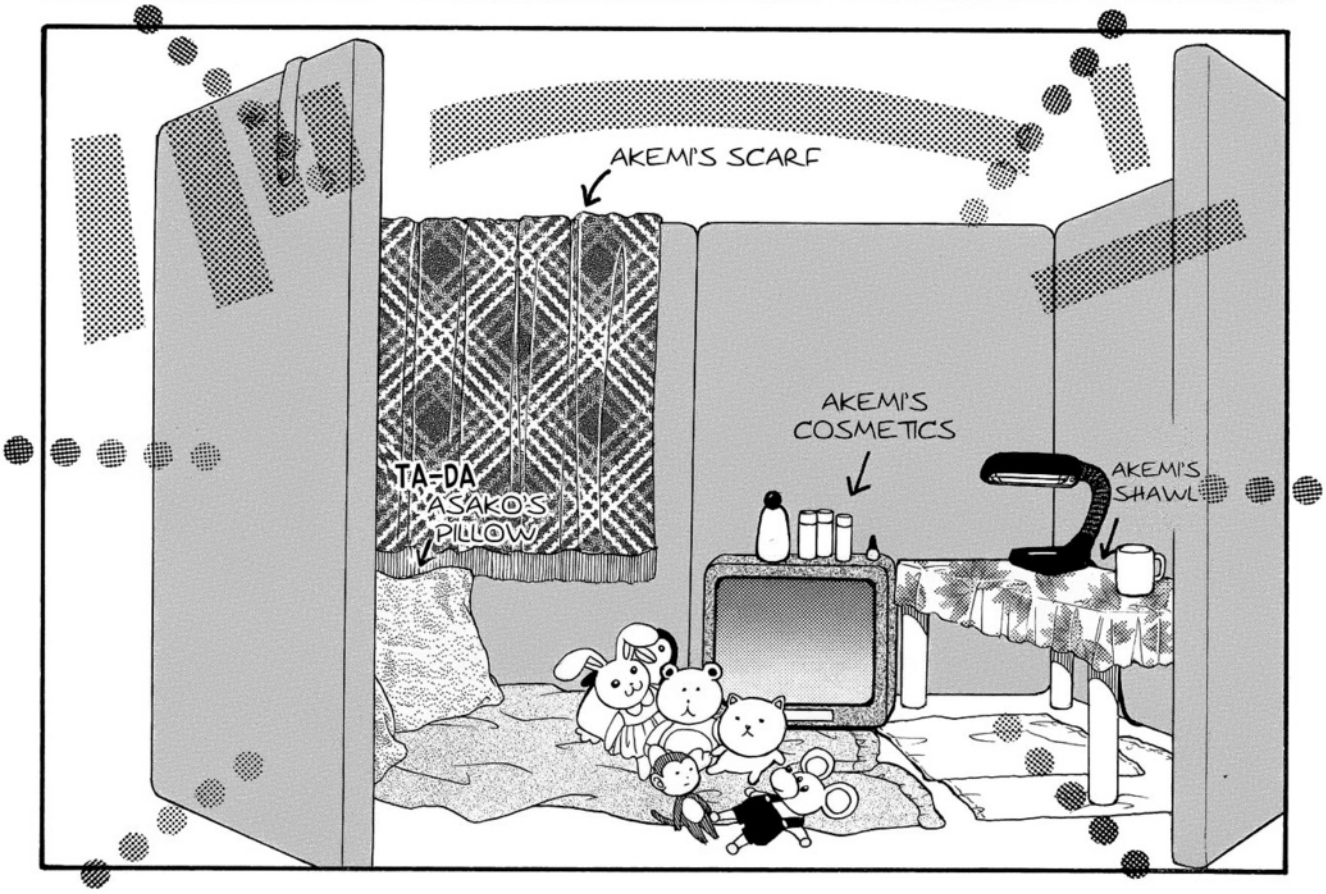

THERE.
WHY NOT?
THEY'RE NOT COMING OUT.
...IT FEELS GOOD.
...FOR SOME REASON...
IT'S DONE! ♡
IT'S DONE! ♡
DOESN'T OUR ROOM LOOK FABULOUS? ♡
HA HA HA HA
YEAH!
SHALL WE INVITE SOME GUESTS OVER?

OH!
OOF!
MINORU AND TAKUYA, OF COURSE! TAKE THAT!!
BAM BAM BAM BAM
BAM BAM BAM
FUTURE WHAT?
MA-BO, I'D LIKE TO INVITE MY FUTURE HUSBAND AND BROTHER-IN-LAW.
BLUSH
BLUSH
OH!
Hee hee
IT'S A SECRET.
CHAK
CAN YOU RECORD MY EIGHT O'CLOCK SHOW?
WHAT'S SHE DOING?
HMM... NOW WHERE'S MINORU'S NUMBER?
WHAT CHAN-NEL?
FWUP FWUP
RING
RING
WHO ARE YOU GOING TO CALL?
TUP TUP TUP
I NEED A PHONE!


ICHIKA FUJII WANTS TO SPEAK WITH YOU.
WHAT?
DROWSY
THEY MUST'VE BEEN SOUND ASLEEP.
HUH?
SILENCE
MINORU!
TAKUYA!
YOU HAVE A PHONE CALL!
TAKUYA!

KLAK
AND NOW...
YOUR ROOM? WHERE?
WHAT?
COME AND SEE IT!
WE WORKED WEALLY HARD!
YOU'RE INVITED...
...TO MA-BO'S AND MY ROOM!
BIG SISTERS!
WHUP


AND...


AKEMI'S SCARF
AKEMI'S COSMETICS
AKEMI'S SHAWL
TA-DA
ASAKO'S PILLOW

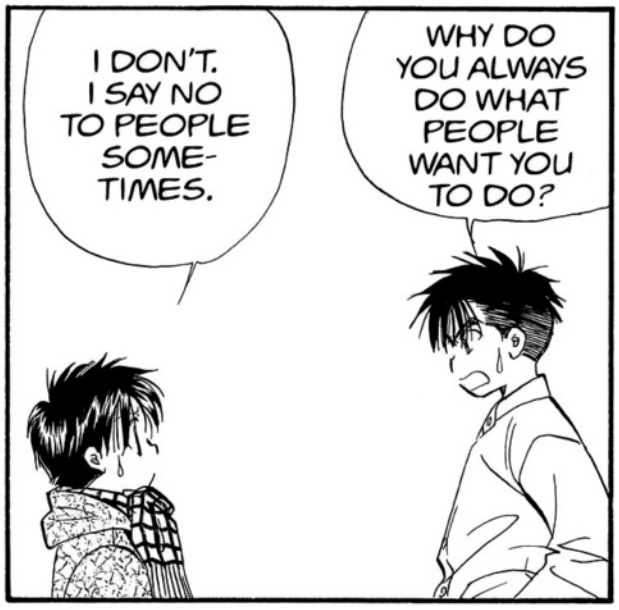
WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE?
HUH?
KLAK

CHAK

WHUP
AGH...
PUT IT ALL BACK RIGHT NOW!
YOU GOOFY KIDS!
AAAH
GOT HIT.
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BUG TAKUYA?
EEEK
YOU DID WHAT?
WAAAH
GEEZ. WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO DO CRAZY STUFF?
TOLD TO HELP CLEAN UP
BUT I INVITED...
WAAAH
... MINORU AND TAKUYA OVER TO SEE IT!
WE JUST WANTED OUR OWN ROOM!
sob sob

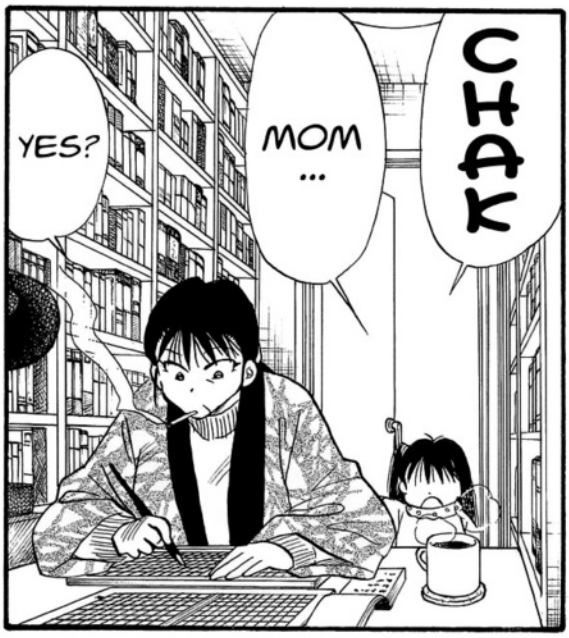
HUH?
HUH?
FORGET THE INVITATION TO THEIR ROOM, OKAY?
SORRY, TAKUYA. THOSE TWO DON'T REALIZE THE TROUBLE THEY CAUSE YOU.
SOB
SOB
SO...
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
...
I'M SO SORRY, MINORU AND TAKUYA.
SOB
SOB
WE JUST WANTED OUR OWN ROOM ...
...
WE CAN MAKE ONE OUT OF CARDBOARD BOXES.
DON'T WORRY ...
THEY ALREADY MADE ONE AND GOT IN TROUBLE.
I TOLD YOU...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE A ROOM OF YOUR VERY OWN?

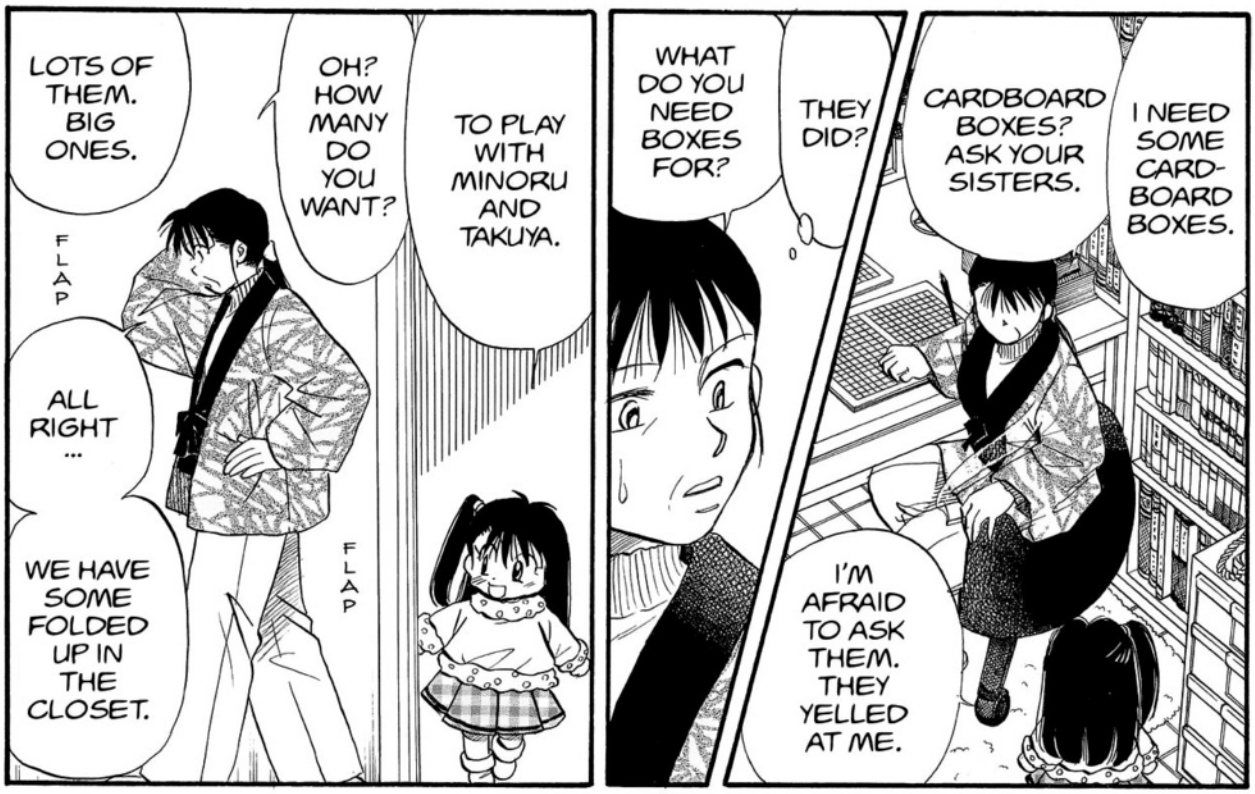
WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS, FUJII?
...IF YOU ALWAYS TRY TO PLEASE PEOPLE, THEY'LL USE YOU.
LISTEN ...
GRR

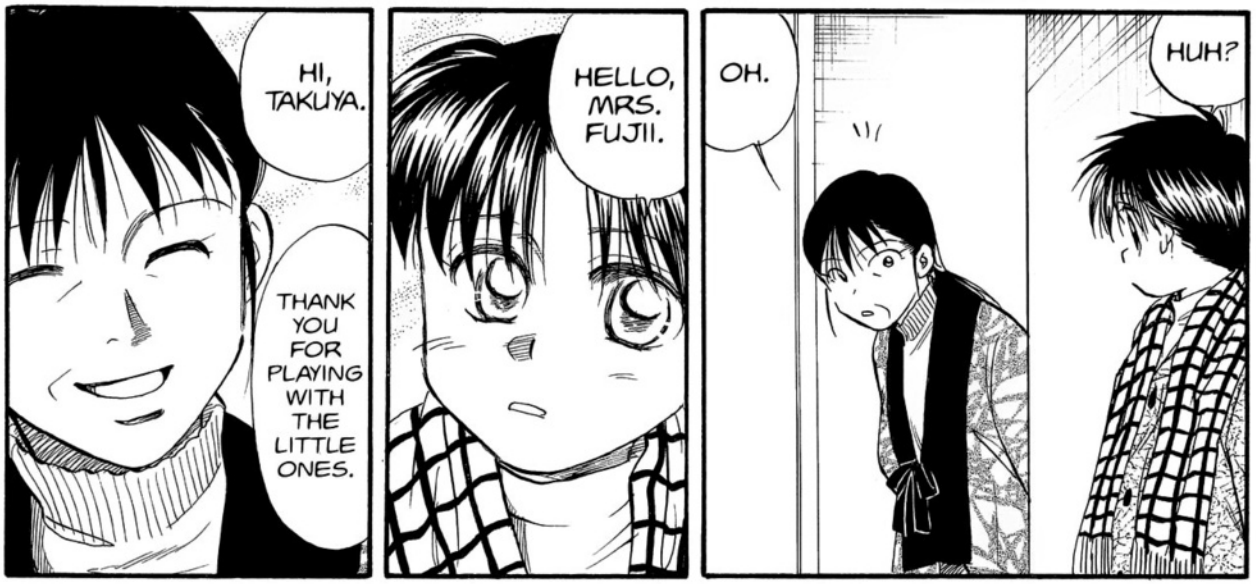

I DON'T. I SAY NO TO PEOPLE SOME-TIMES.
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS DO WHAT PEOPLE WANT YOU TO DO?

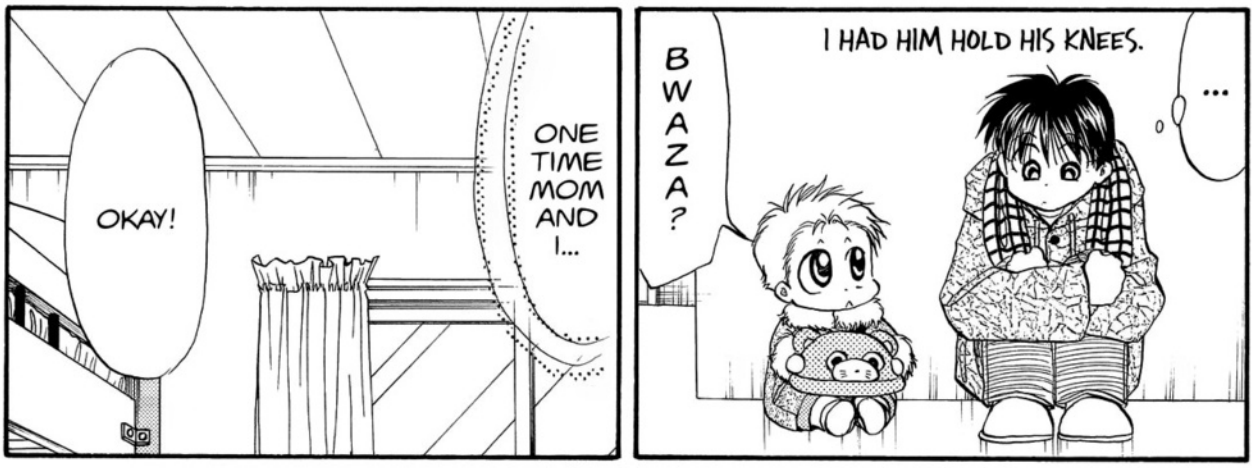
THROB
THROB
THROB
THROB
GRRR
GRRR
GRRR
GRRR
HUH?
THOSE TWO SEE THE WORLD IN COMPLETELY DIFFERENT WAYS.
THEY'RE SCAWY.

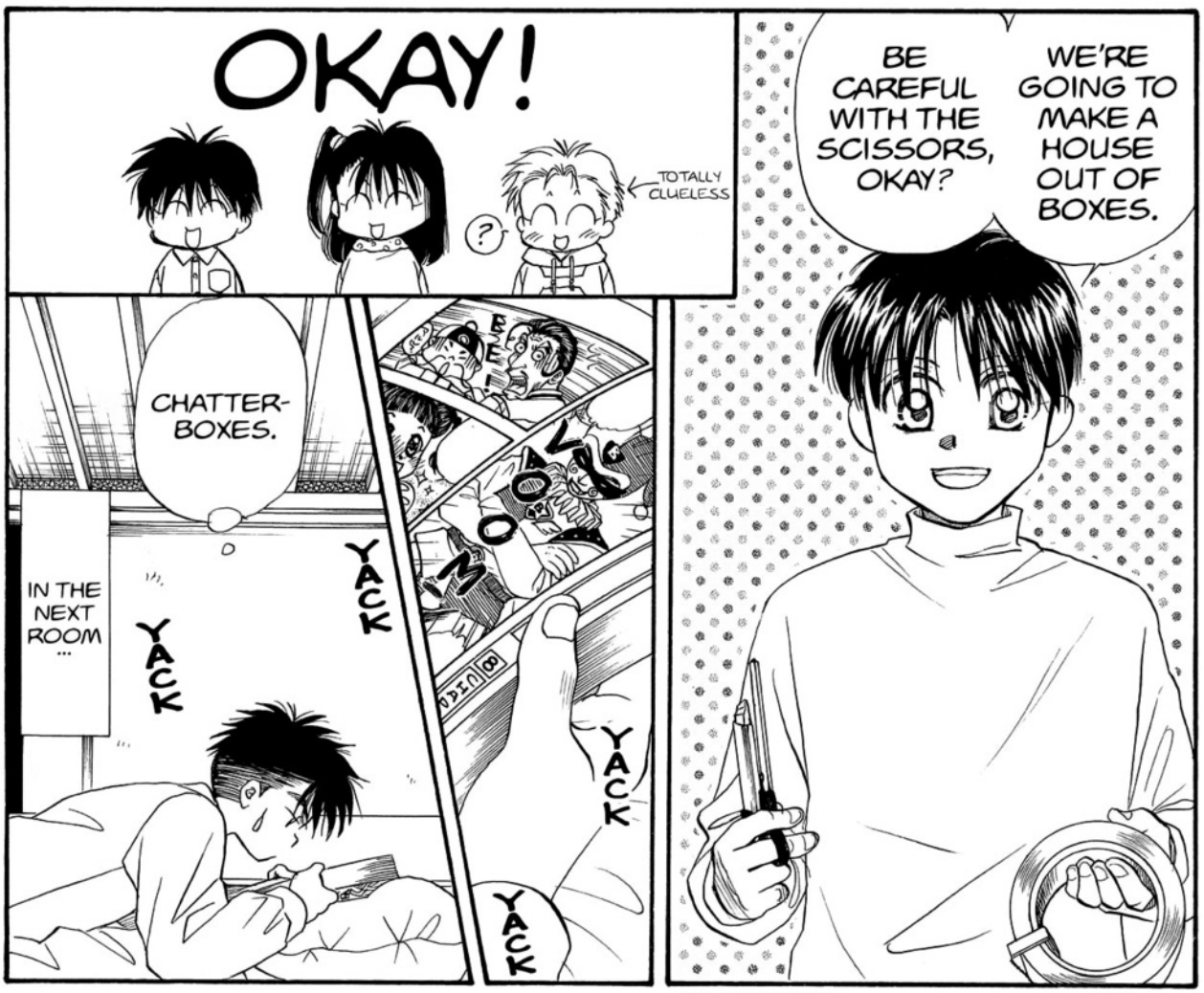
KHAKS
KHAKS
KHAKS


CHAK
MOM ...
YES?


TO PLAY WITH MINORU AND TAKUYA.
OH? HOW MANY DO YOU WANT?
LOTS OF THEM. BIG ONES.
FLAP
FLAP
ALL RIGHT ...
WE HAVE SOME FOLDED UP IN THE CLOSET.
I NEED SOME CARD-BOARD BOXES.
CARDBOARD BOXES? ASK YOUR SISTERS.
I'M AFRAID TO ASK THEM. THEY YELLED AT ME.
THEY DID?
WHAT DO YOU NEED BOXES FOR?

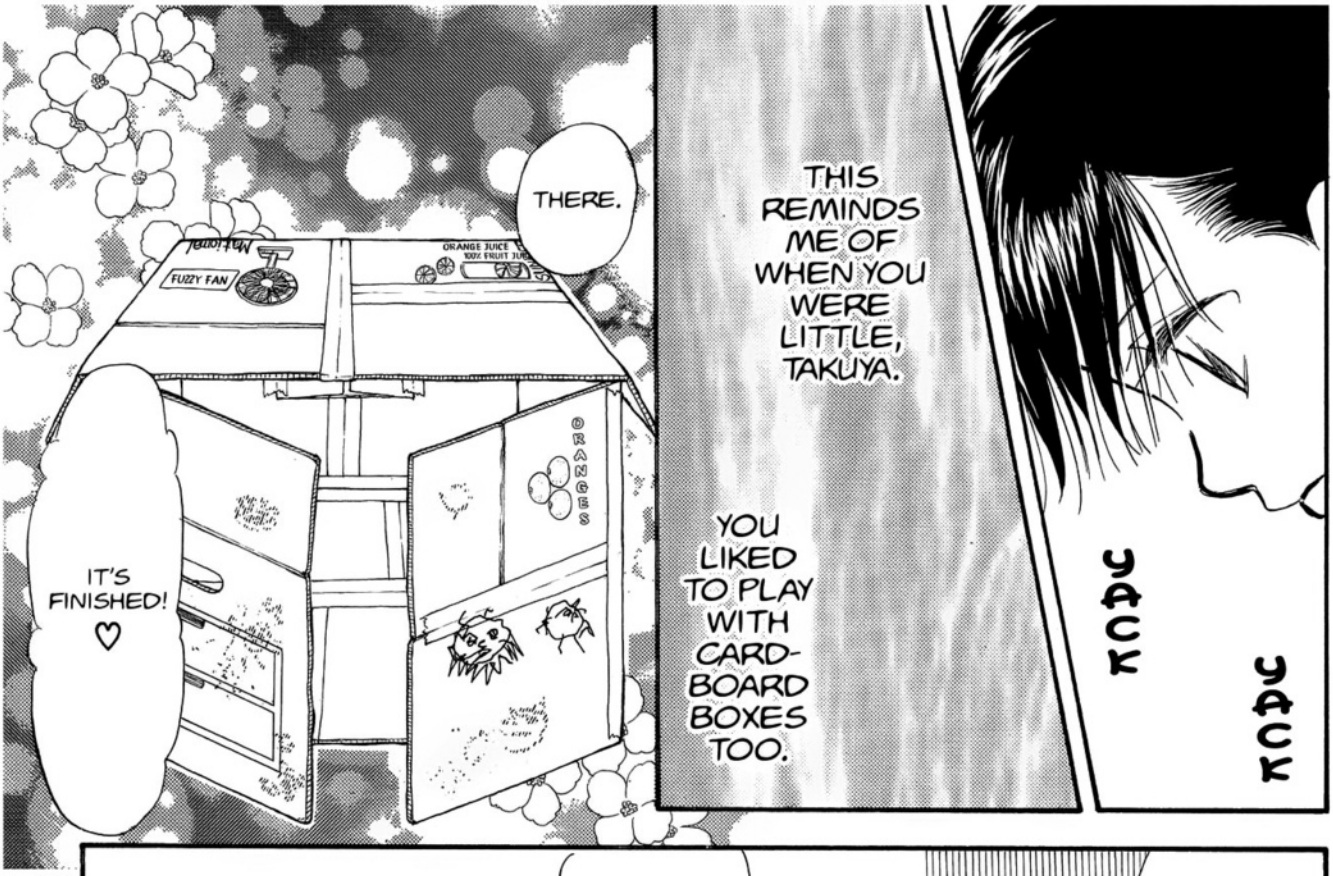

HELLO, MRS. FUJII.
HI, TAKUYA.
THANK YOU FOR PLAYING WITH THE LITTLE ONES.
HUH?
OH.


ONE TIME MOM AND I...
OKAY!
I HAD HIM HOLD HIS KNEES.
...
BWAZA?

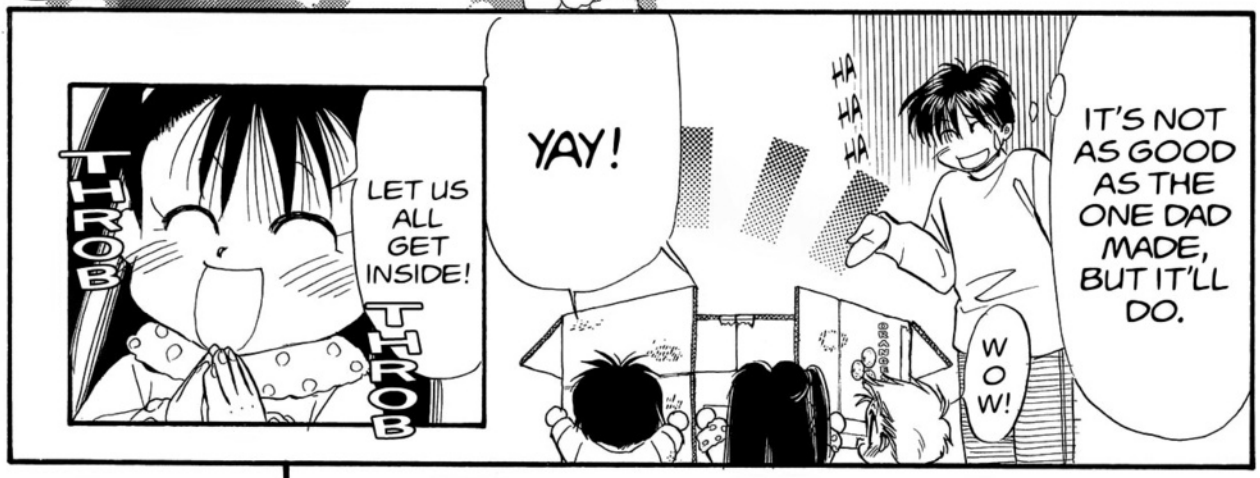

OKAY!
TOTALLY CLUELESS
?
BE CAREFUL WITH THE SCISSORS, OKAY?
WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A HOUSE OUT OF BOXES.
CHATTER-BOXES.
IN THE NEXT ROOM ...
YACK
YACK
YACK
YACK
EEE!

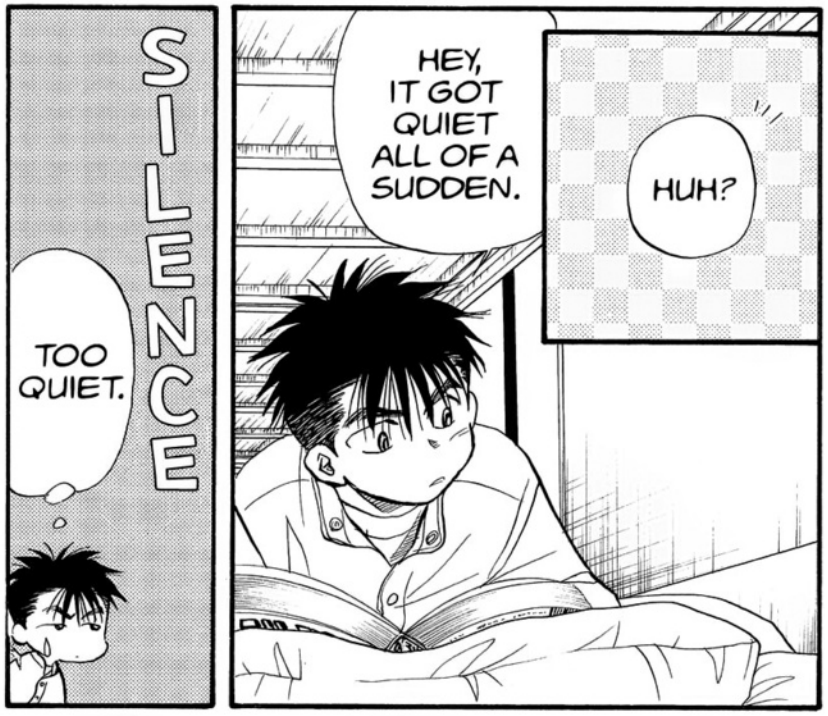
WELL, THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH, I GUESS.
WOW, MINORU, YOU'RE AN ARTIST!
I CAN'T FIND THE WED CRAYON!
HEE! ♡
STRIK
STRIK

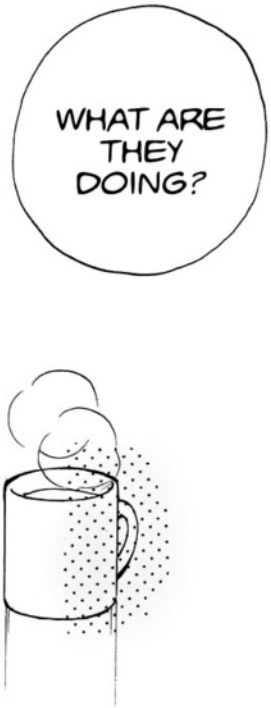
STRIK
STRIK

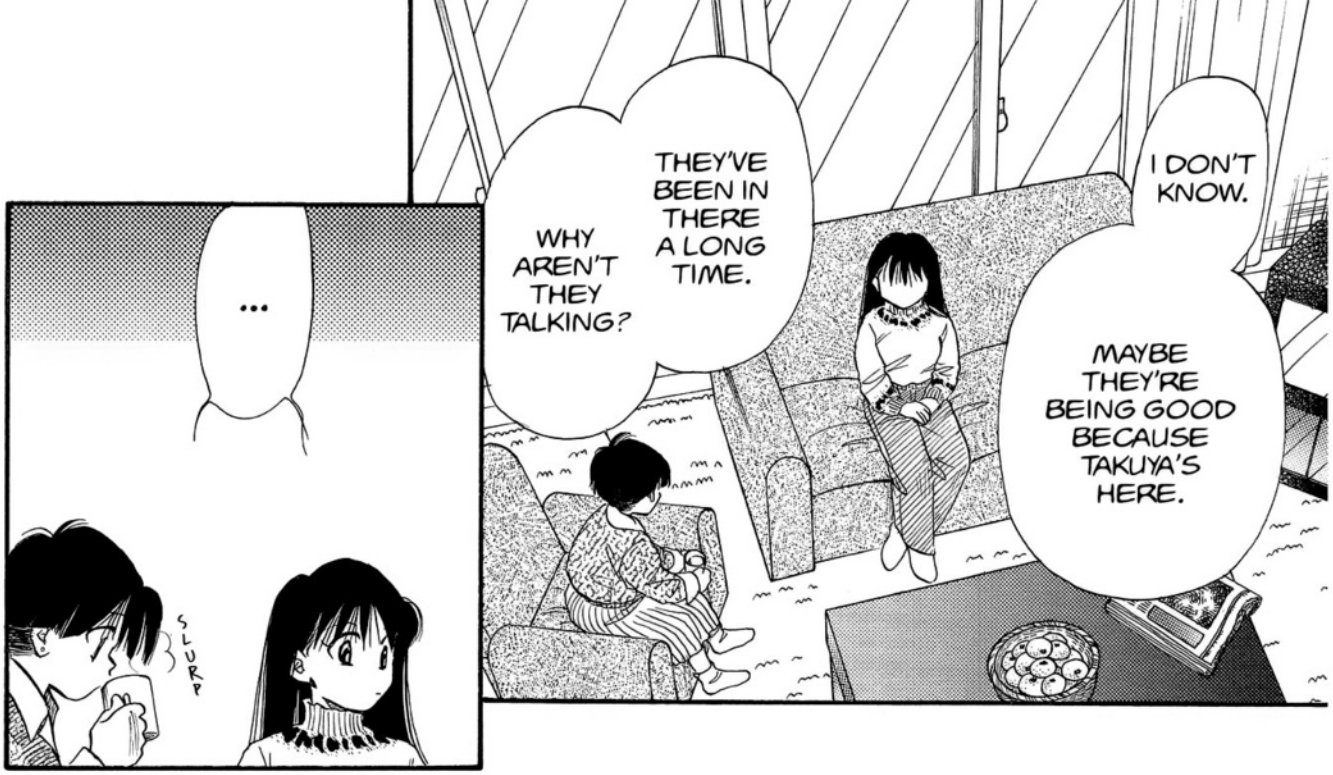

THERE.
FUZZY FAN
ORANGE JUICE
100% FRUIT JUICE
ORANGES
IT'S FINISHED! ♡

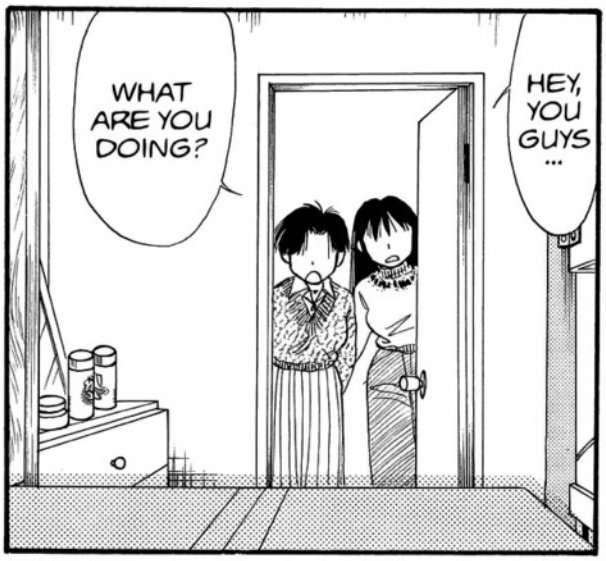
THIS REMINDS ME OF WHEN YOU WERE LITTLE, TAKUYA.
YOU LIKED TO PLAY WITH CARD-BOARD BOXES TOO.
YACK
YACK

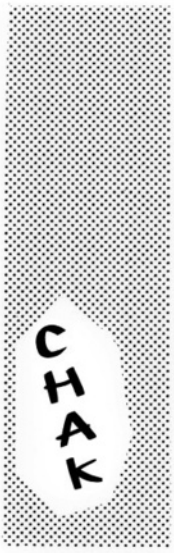

THROB
LET US ALL GET INSIDE!
THROB
YAY!
HA HA HA
WOW!
IT'S NOT AS GOOD AS THE ONE DAD MADE, BUT IT'LL DO.


HEY, IT GOT QUIET ALL OF A SUDDEN.
HUH?
SILENCE
TOO QUIET.


WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

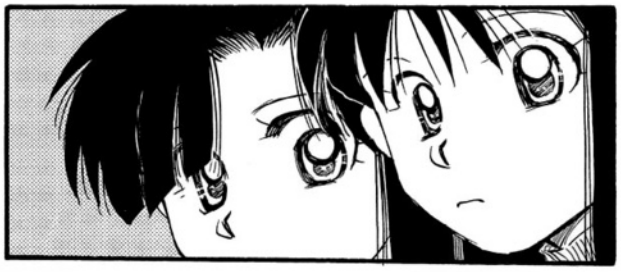

I DON'T KNOW.
THEY'VE BEEN IN THERE A LONG TIME.
WHY AREN'T THEY TALKING?
MAYBE THEY'RE BEING GOOD BECAUSE TAKUYA'S HERE.
...
SLURP

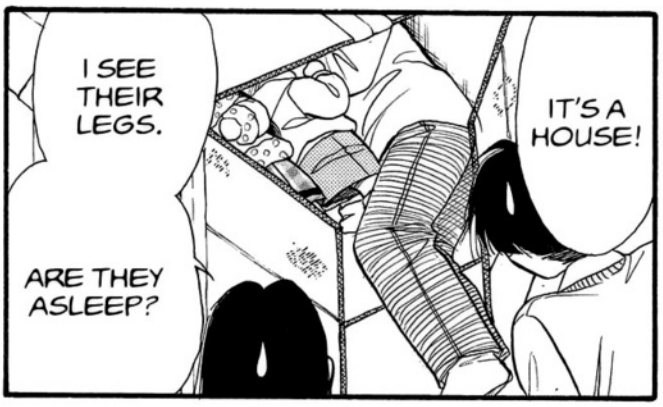

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
HEY, YOU GUYS ...


CHAK

WHAT'S GOING ON?
M-MAYBE WE SHOULD GO SEE...

AREN'T THEY COLD WITHOUT ANY COVERS?
HOW CAN THEY SLEEP LIKE THAT?
HA HA HA... THEY'RE OUT COLD.
ZZZ
ZZZ
SUMKIS



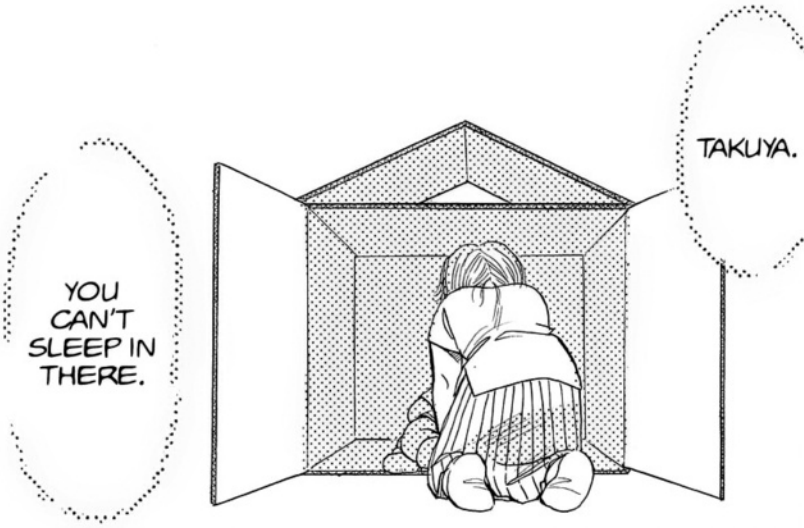

I SEE THEIR LEGS.
ARE THEY ASLEEP?
IT'S A HOUSE!

CAN I BORROW YOUR BLANKET, ASAKO?
SURE.
THEY'RE REALLY OUT, HUH?
MA-BO AND ICHIKA LOOK LIKE ANGELS WHEN THEY'RE SLEEPING.
HOW SWEET.
OH!
WHUP
WHAT'S THIS?
HUH? WHAT'S WRONG?
HUH?
AKEMI, LOOK AT TAKUYA.
I FEEL LIKE I'M SPYING ON HIM.

YEAH, TOO BAD.
SIGH... IT'S TOO BAD THEY HAVE TO GROW UP.
TMP TMP TMP

...YA...
Z Z Z
Z Z Z

HOW CUTE! ♡
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED AN ADORABLE LITTLE BROTHER!
THIS ONE'S NOT ADORABLE.
THROB THROB ♡


TAKUYA.
YOU CAN'T SLEEP IN THERE.

THERE.
SLEEP IN YOUR BED.

...
Z Z Z
Z Z Z

...

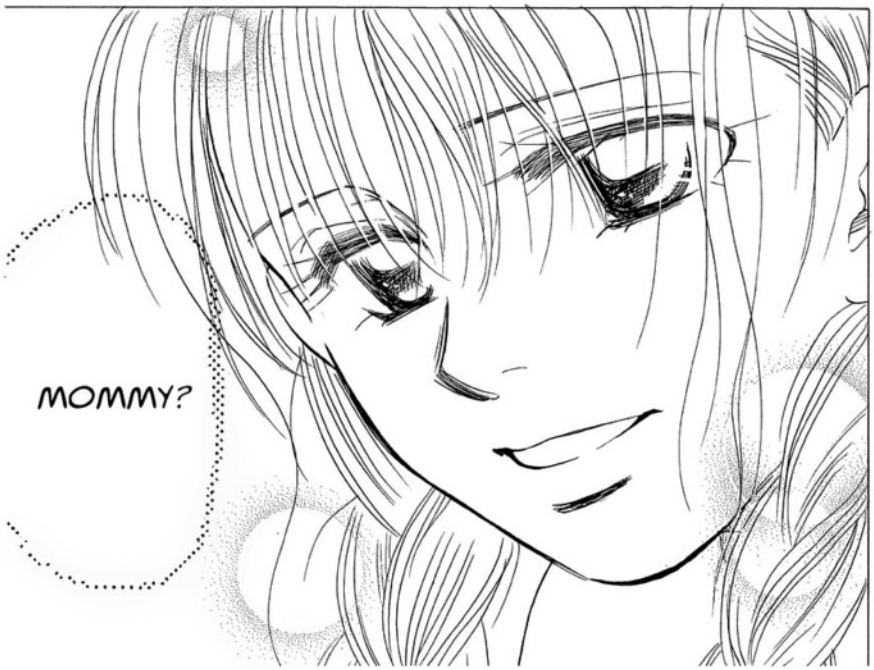
CHAK

MMM...
NO...I'M SLEEPY.

HUH?
LEAVE ME ALONE... SLEEPY...

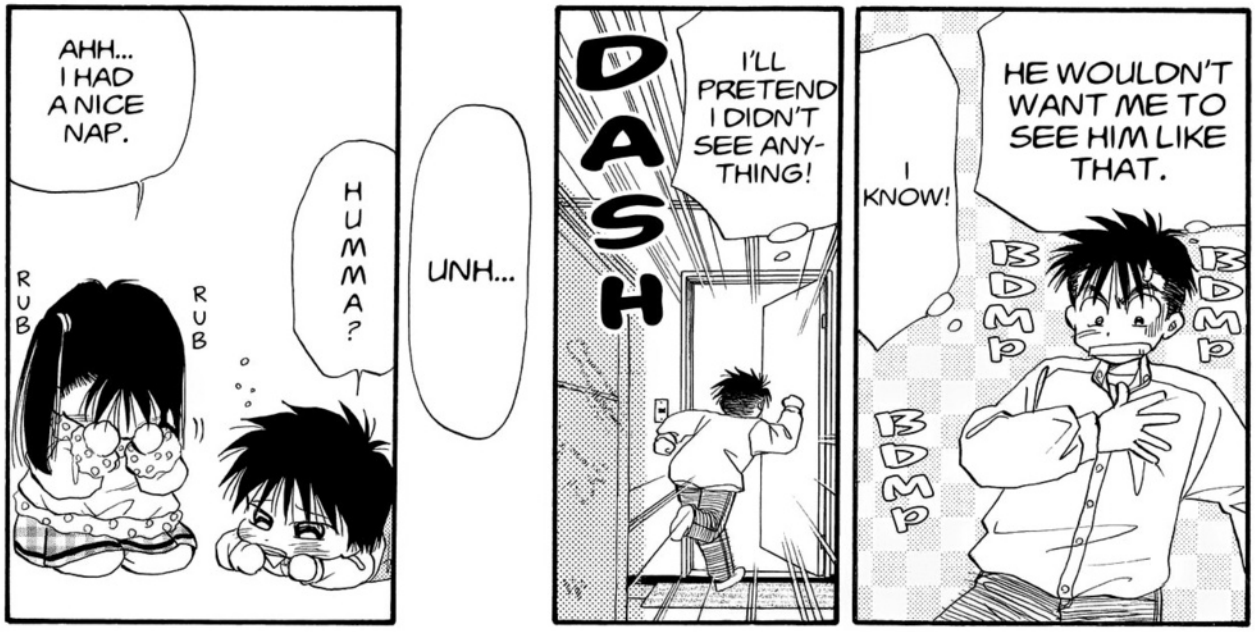
HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA SLEEP FOR?
HEY, YOU GUYS!
MM...

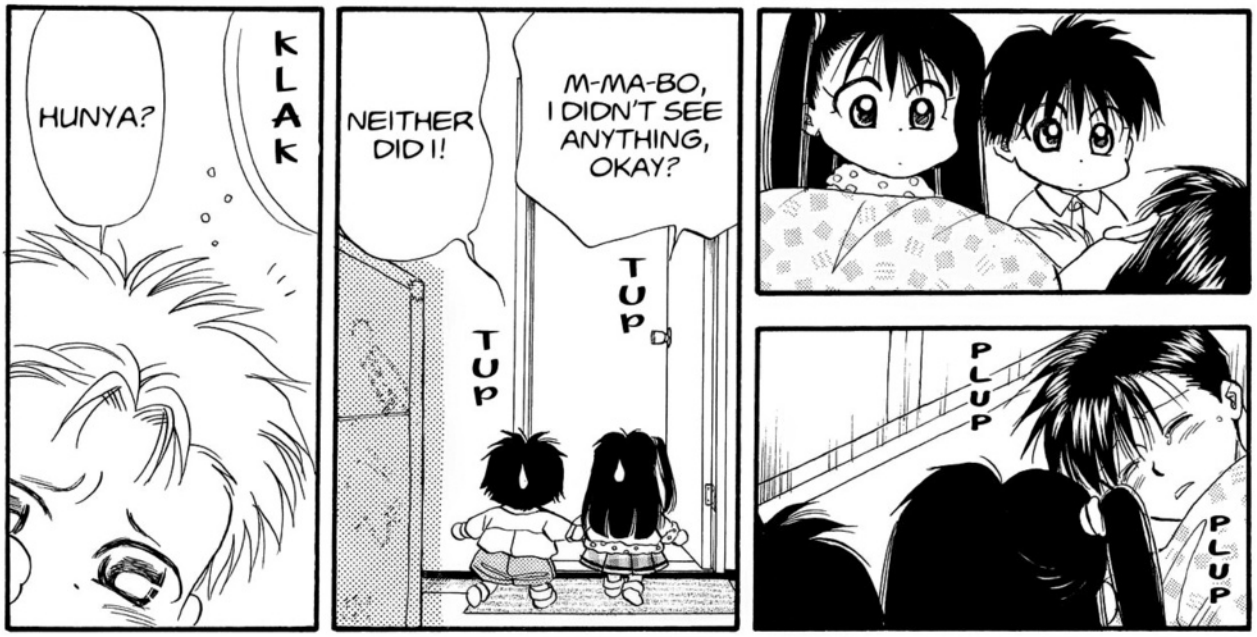
SO THAT'S WHY IT GOT QUIET.
WHAT ARE THEY, PUPPIES?
MADINE BACK
TWO DRAWERS RK

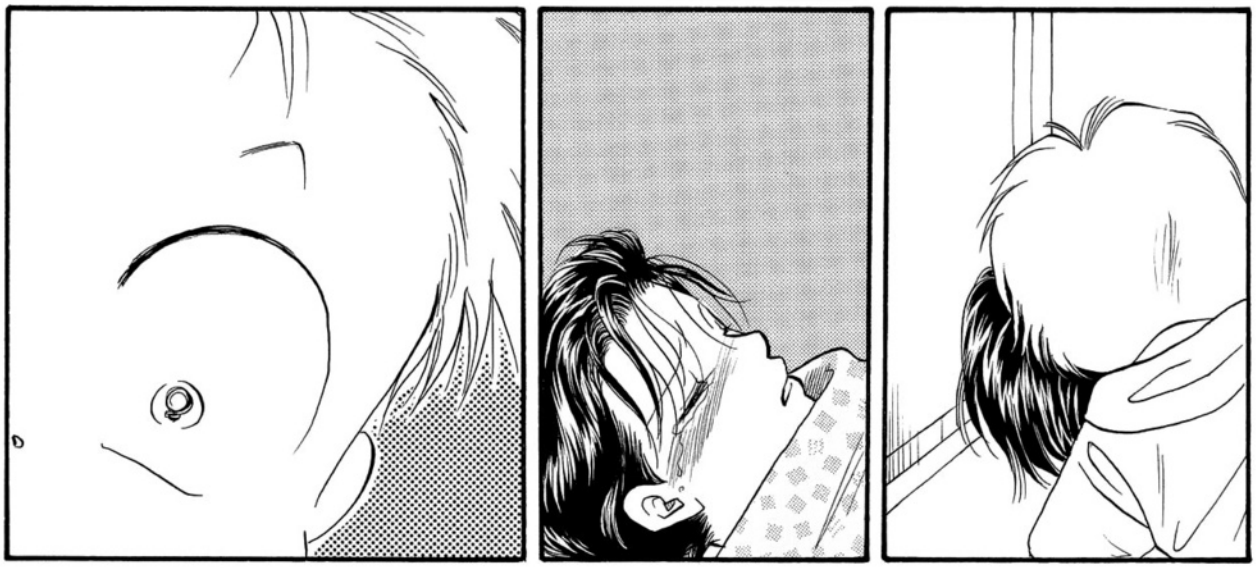

MOMMY?

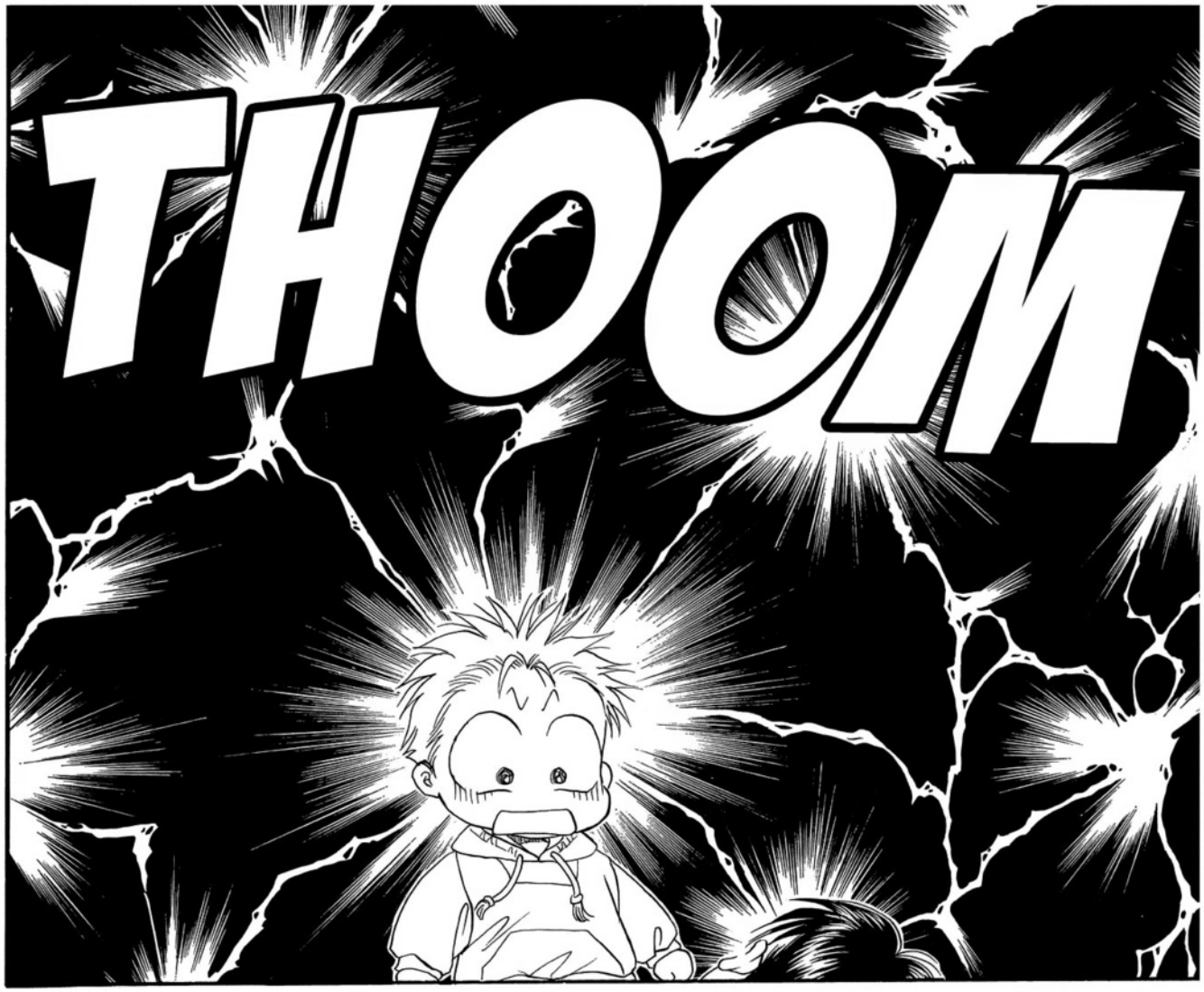
HERE...
...TAKUYA.

...
SWUFF
OKAY, MOMMY ...
MOMMY ...
PLUP
PLUP PLUP
WHUP


AHH... I HAD A NICE NAP.
RUB
RUB
HUMMA?
UNH...
DASH
I'LL PRETEND I DIDN'T SEE ANY-THING!
I KNOW!
HE WOULDN'T WANT ME TO SEE HIM LIKE THAT.
BDMP
BDMP
BDMP

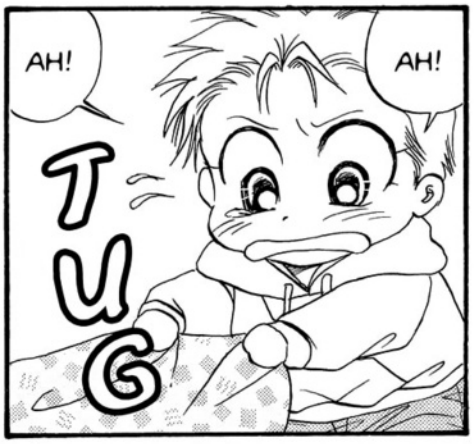

HUNYA?
KLAK
NEITHER DID I!
M-MA-BO, I DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING, OKAY?
TUP
TUP
PLUP
PLUP

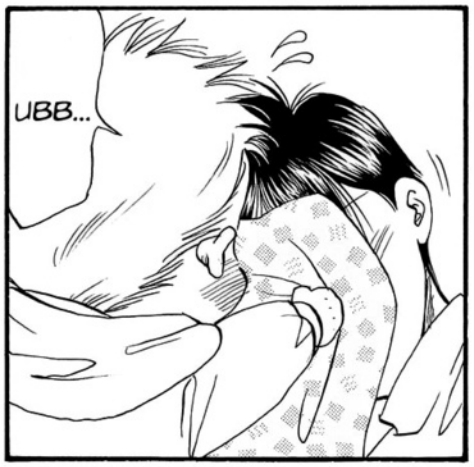



THOOM

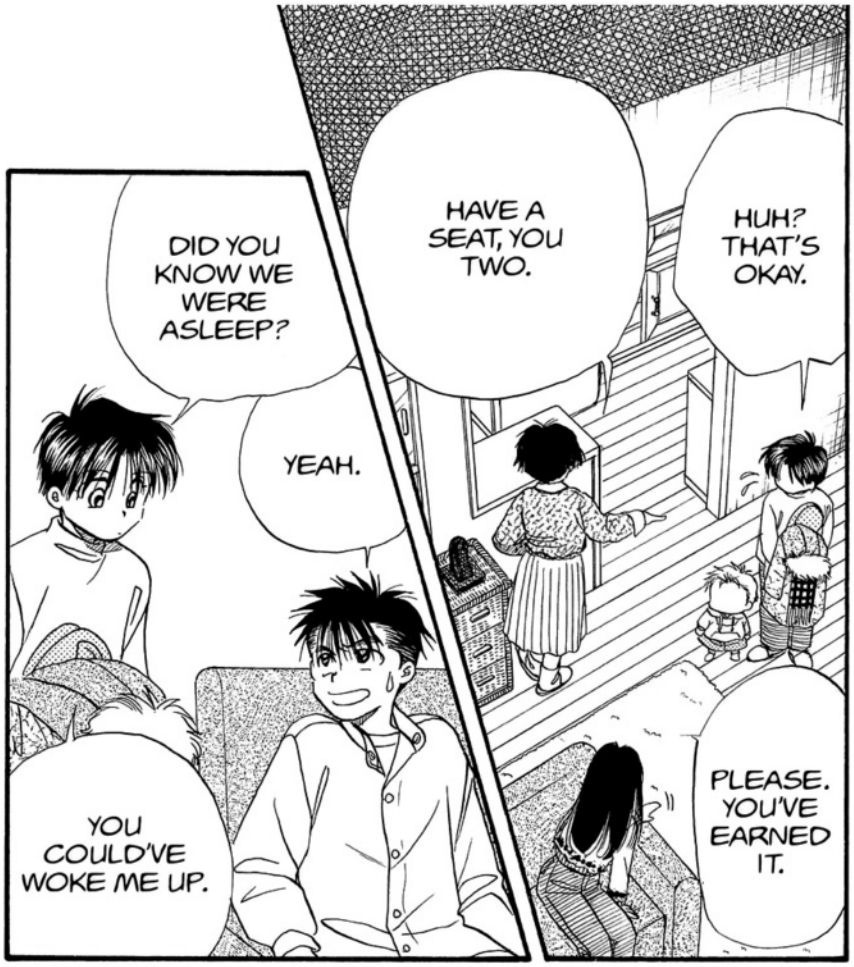
STOP IT, MINORU!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WHUP

UNH...
WHA...
SHUG
SHUG
HUH?!

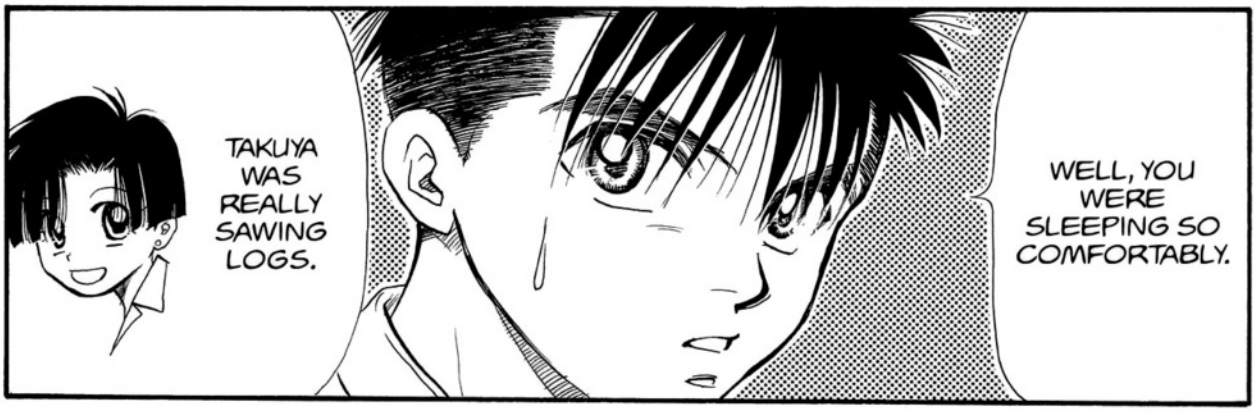

AH!
AH!
TUG

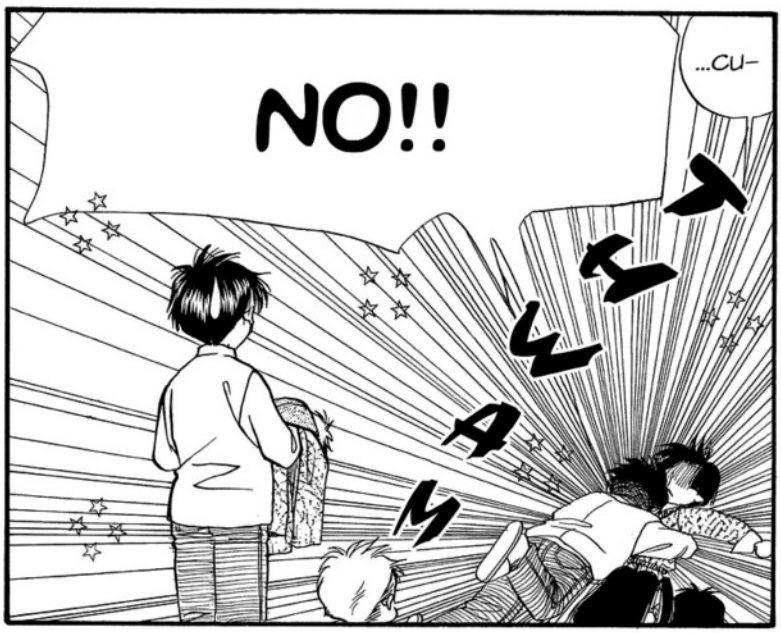

UBB...

...
PLUP
PLUP
!
I COULDN'T BREATHE.
HFF
HFF
minoru
WHY IS MINORU CRYING?
CHAK
um...
awkward
WE'D BETTER GO HOME NOW.
I GUESS WE FELL ASLEEP.


DID YOU KNOW WE WERE ASLEEP?
YEAH.
YOU COULD'VE WOKE ME UP.
HAVE A SEAT, YOU TWO.
HUH? THAT'S OKAY.
PLEASE. YOU'VE EARNED IT.

WAIT. HAVE SOME COCOA FIRST.
AND SOME POUND CAKE.
WHY DIDN'T SHE GIVE US ANY?


TAKUYA WAS REALLY SAWING LOGS.
WELL, YOU WERE SLEEPING SO COMFORTABLY.


NO!!
...CU-
ZZZZZZ

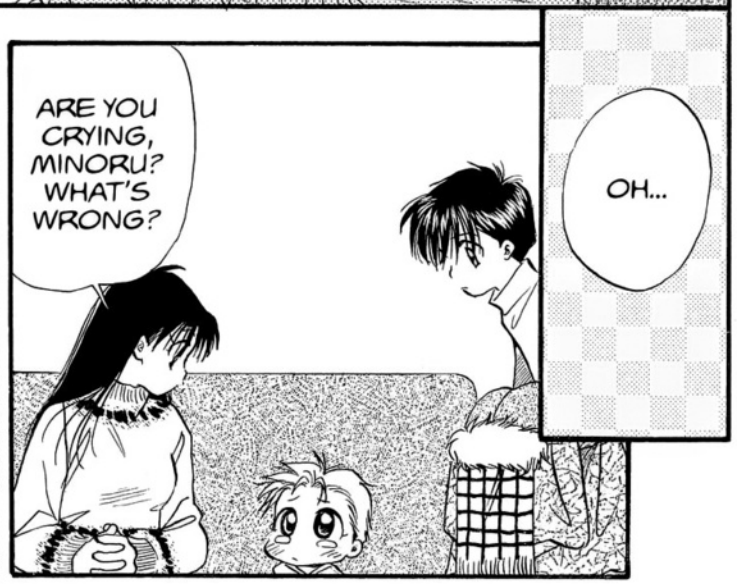
HUH?
SORRY, BUT WE PEEKED IN AT YOU WHEN YOU WERE ASLEEP.
YOU LOOKED SO...

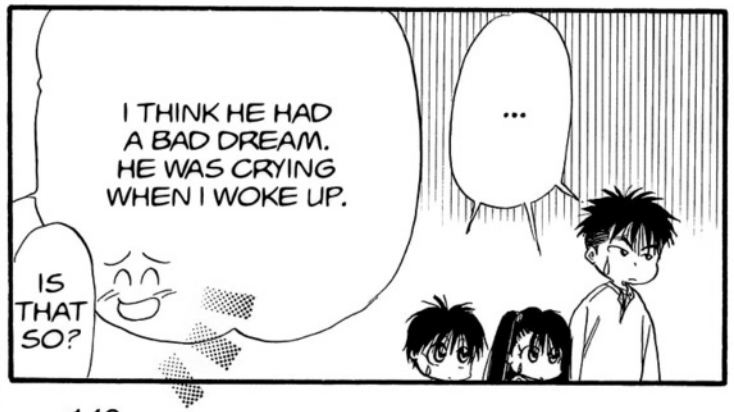
SWITCH
SWITCH
THE FUJII FAMILY IS A LITTLE STRANGE SOME-TIMES.

HE DOESN'T WANT TO HEAR HOW CUTE HE IS WHEN HE'S SLEEPING.
I should've realized.
I FORGOT... HE'S A BOY.

...
AKEMI, DON'T SAY ANYTHING.
WH-WHAT WAS THAT FOR?
SHHH
YOU CAN'T.
EVERY-ONE HAS SOME-THING HE DOESN'T WANT ANYONE TO FIND OUT.

TODAY I...
...PLAYED JUST LIKE I DID WHEN I WAS LITTLE.


ARE YOU CRYING, MINORU? WHAT'S WRONG?
OH...


I THINK HE HAD A BAD DREAM. HE WAS CRYING WHEN I WOKE UP.
...
IS THAT SO?

I'D FORGOTTEN THAT I USED TO PLAY LIKE THAT.

IT WAS FUN. IT TOOK ME BACK TO ANOTHER TIME.

AND WHILE I WAS THERE ...

...I HAD...

...A NICE DREAM.

...

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT?

HUH?

OKAY.

YEAH, BE TOUGH!

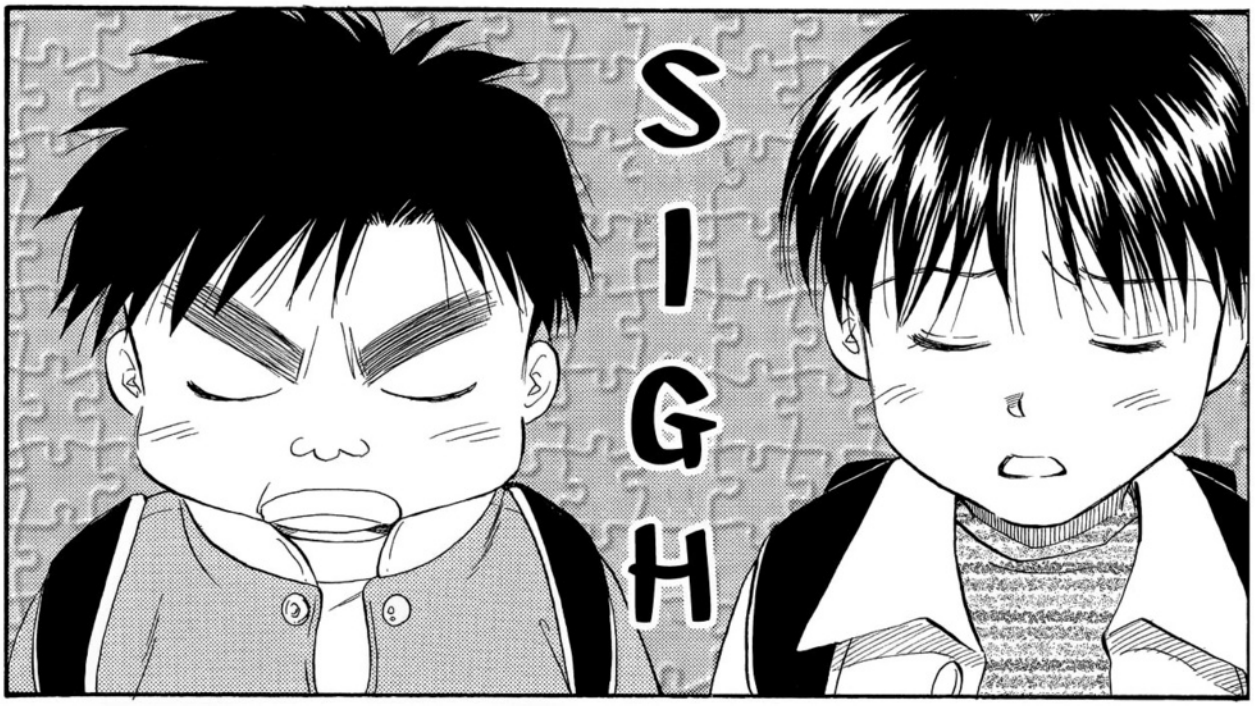
TAKUYA! YOU HAVE TO BE TOUGH IN THIS LIFE!

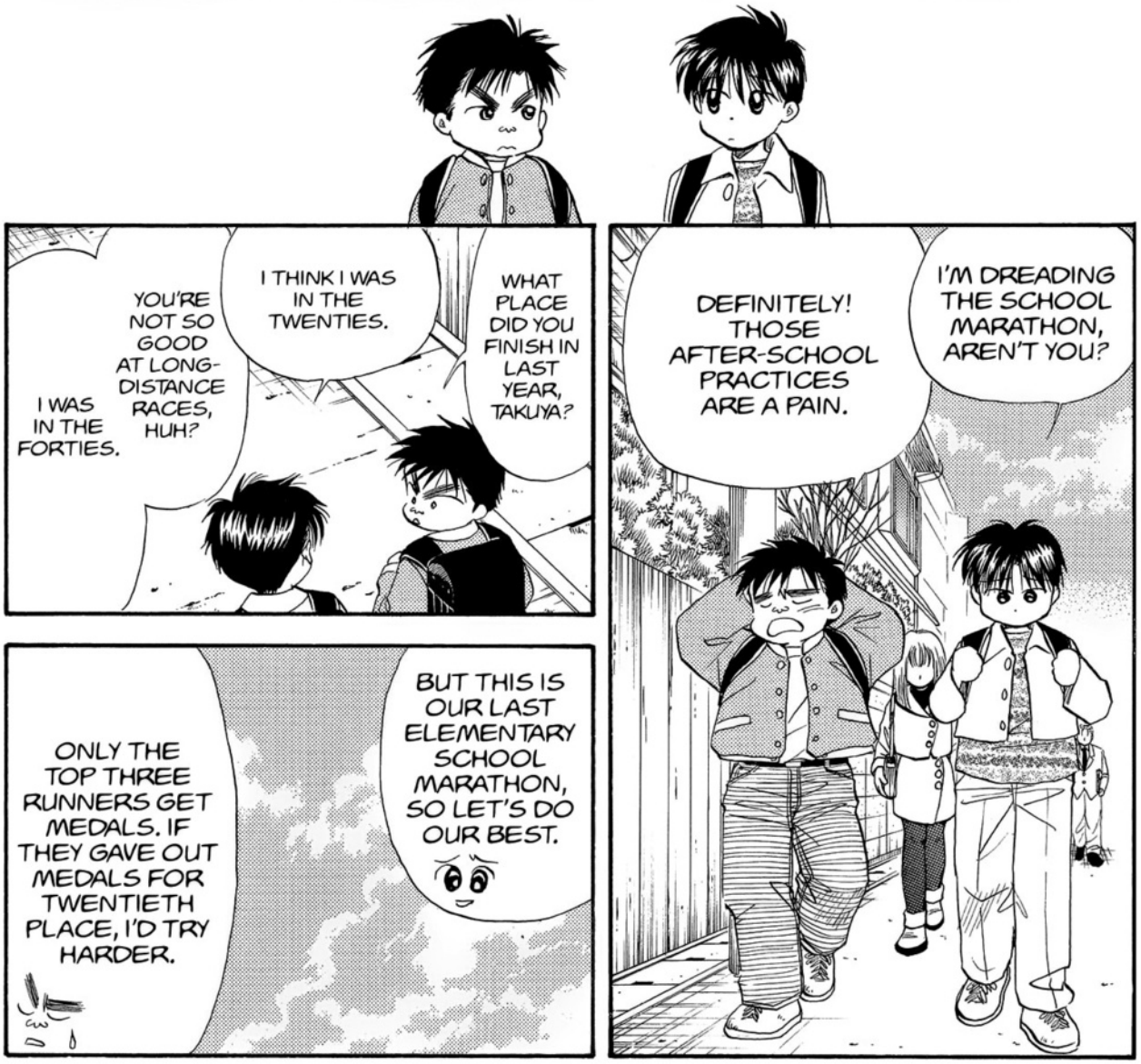
JUMP

Chapter 96 / The End

BABY & Me

Chapter 97


SIGH


WHAT PLACE DID YOU FINISH IN LAST YEAR, TAKUYA?
I THINK I WAS IN THE TWENTIES.
YOU'RE NOT SO GOOD AT LONG-DISTANCE RACES, HUH?
I WAS IN THE FORTIES.
I'M DREADING THE SCHOOL MARATHON, AREN'T YOU?
DEFINITELY! THOSE AFTER-SCHOOL PRACTICES ARE A PAIN.
BUT THIS IS OUR LAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MARATHON, SO LET'S DO OUR BEST.
ONLY THE TOP THREE RUNNERS GET MEDALS. IF THEY GAVE OUT MEDALS FOR TWENTIETH PLACE, I'D TRY HARDER.

I CAN'T HELP IT. IT'S LIKE I'VE ALREADY WON!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, KUMADE? CREEPY IS NO WAY TO START OFF THE DAY.
BWA HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA
KUMADE, DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE GOING TO WIN THE SCHOOL MARATHON?
HUH?
NO IDEA.
WHAT'S THAT?
I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU GUYS.
TOOL TOOL TOOL
MAYBE SO, BUT THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS **YOU** WINNING IT.
WE HAVE A SECRET WEAPON!
GRADE 6 CLASS 1 IS GONNA WIN IT FOR SURE!
AND SO...
NO.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHO WON IT LAST YEAR?

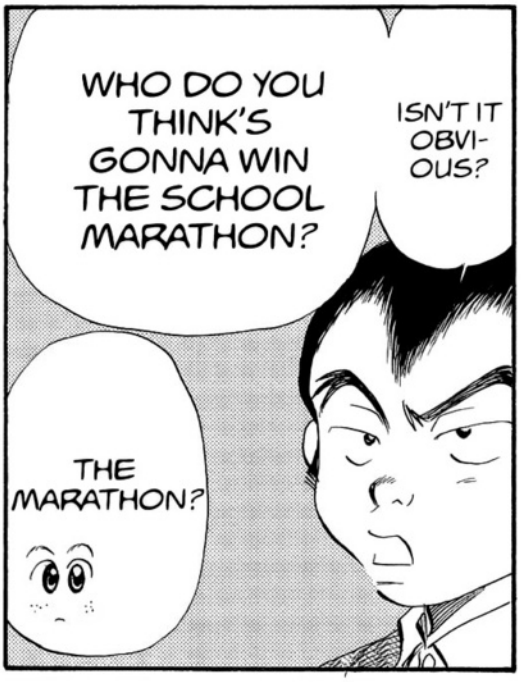
AS THE DAY OF THE SCHOOL MARATHON DREW NEAR...
RAH
RAH
HEY, FUJIWARA!
YOUR BIG DAY'S COMING! ♡
TWITCH
AH...
BLUSH
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT!
YUKIO FUJIWARA
GRADE 6 CLASS 1
NICKNAME: GORILLIO
WHAT'S GOT INTO KUMADE? HE'S PRAISING ANOTHER PERSON!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT! POUND YOUR RIVALS INTO THE DIRT!
HA HA HA
IT'S THE ONLY THING I'M GOOD AT, SO I REALLY HAVE TO SHOW PEOPLE WHAT I'VE GOT!
YEAH. I'M GONNA WIN IT THIS YEAR, TOO.
NOBODY CAN BEAT YOU IN A LONG-DISTANCE RACE!
SWF
SWF

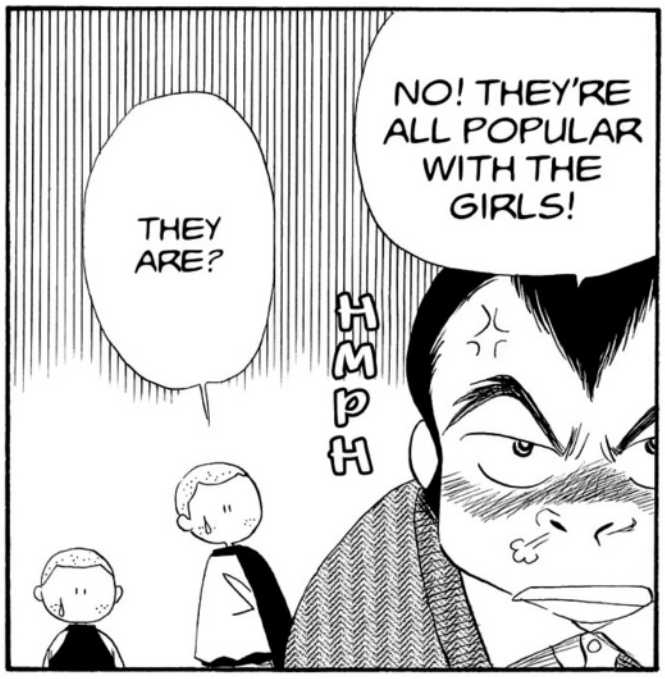
WHAT'S GOING ON, KUMADE?
FLATTERY IS HARD WORK.

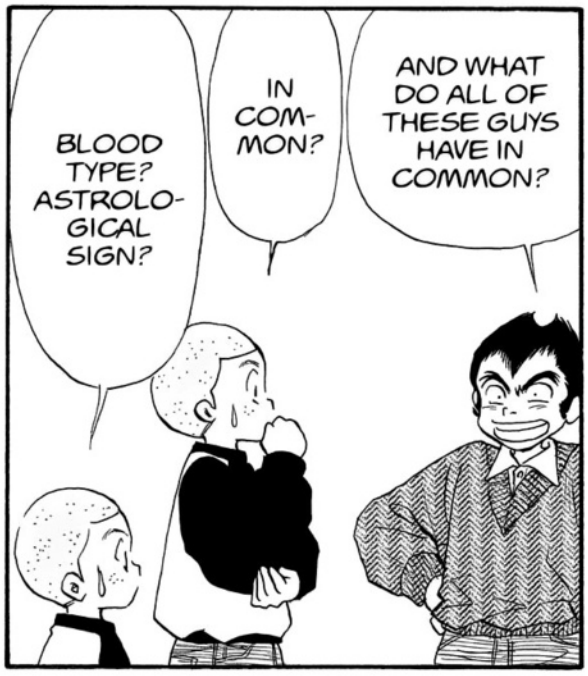
WHEW...

FUJII FROM CLASS 2, THEN!
OR TOSHI-FUMI OKUBO!
FUJÎ
OKUBO

THAT GUY CAN'T RUN DIS-TANCE!
HA HA HA
I DON'T KNOW? TAKUYA ENOKI?


WHO DO YOU THINK'S GONNA WIN THE SCHOOL MARATHON?
ISN'T IT OBVI-OUS?
THE MARATHON?

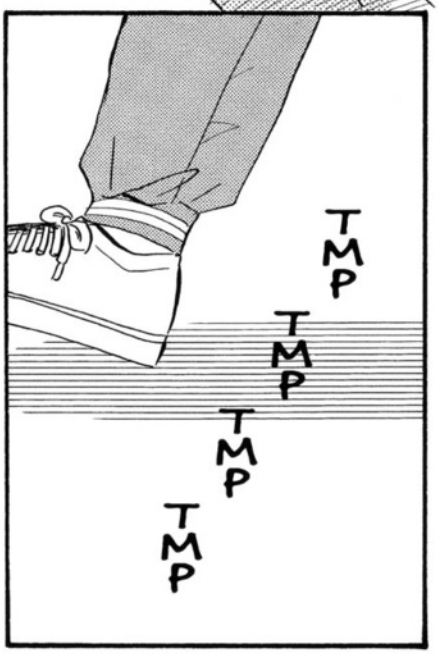

THEY ARE?
NO! THEY'RE ALL POPULAR WITH THE GIRLS!
HMPH


BLOOD TYPE? ASTROLO-GICAL SIGN?
IN COM-MON?
AND WHAT DO ALL OF THESE GUYS HAVE IN COMMON?

WHAT A SMALL, MEAN HEART!!
THE GIRLS WOULD NEVER SCREAM FOR THAT GUY!
BUT IF GORILLIO WINS, IT'LL BE DIFFERENT!
SWUP
AAH!! THE SHRILL SCREAMS OF THE GIRLS WOULD ECHO IN MY EARS FOREVER!
...IF ONE OF THEM WON FIRST PRIZE.
I COUDN'T STAND IT...
IT'D BE A KNIFE IN MY HEART!

AFTER SCHOOL...

WE DID IT! NOW WE CAN GO HOME!
TMP
THAT'S TEN LAPS!
HUFF
HUFF
CANDY

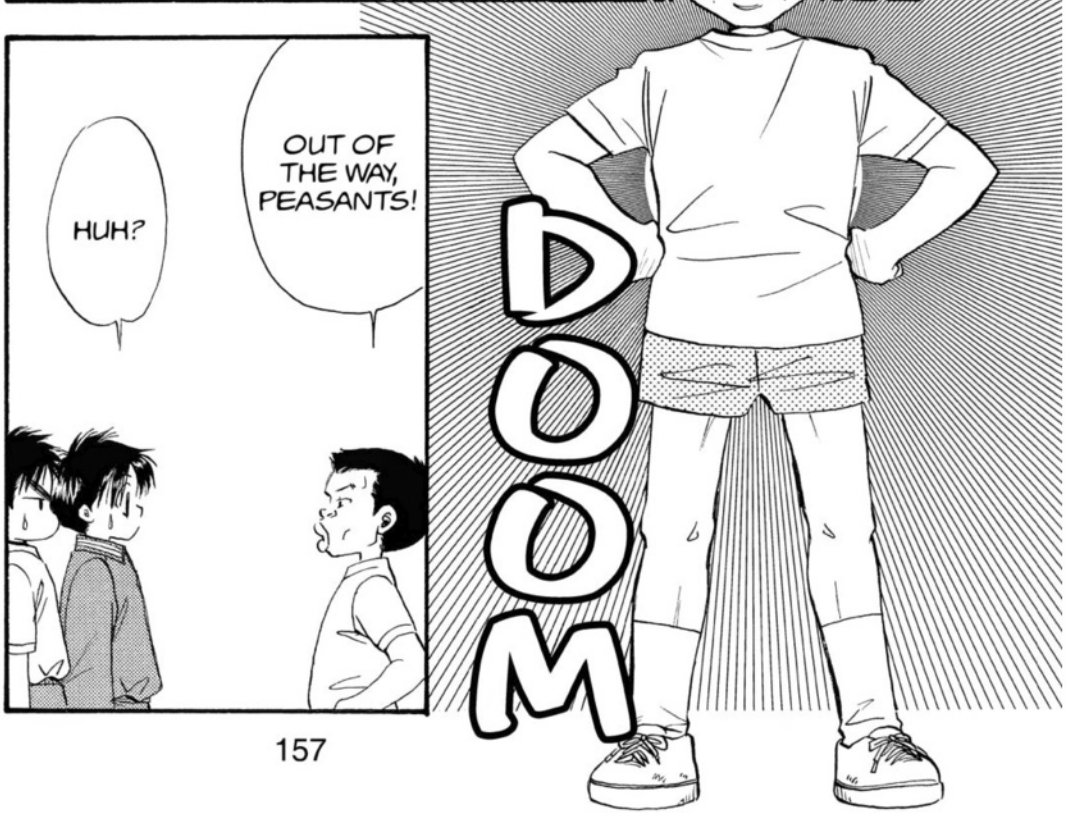

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

Author's Note Part 7

This is the last column! Hooray!

To be honest, when I drew "Gorillio" Fujiwara, I felt like I wasn't doing girls' manga anymore. I'd already gone far outside the range of girls' manga by having Gon and Kumade as characters, but Gorillio was really beyond the pale! Seriously.

Well, this column is full, so this is the end. See you in volume 18! Bye for now! Marimo 5/15/97

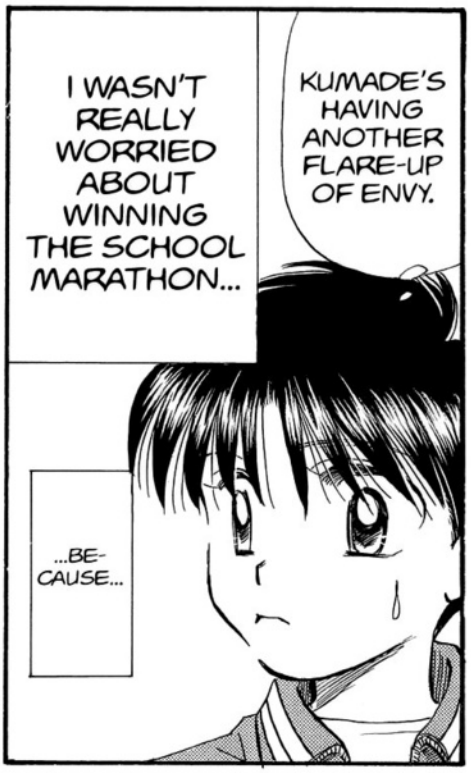


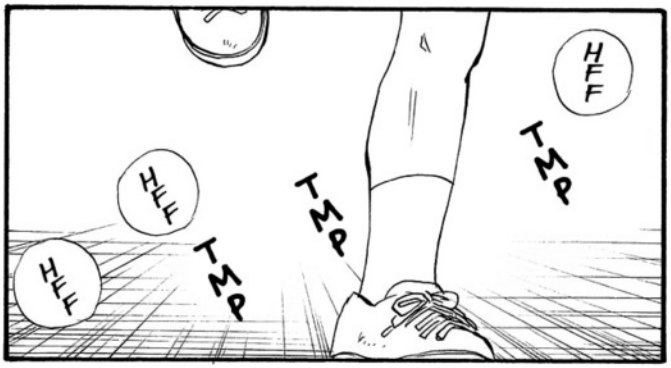
OW!
OW!
YOU'RE BLOCKING MR. FUJIWARA'S PATH! HOW DARE YOU?
SHWAK
OUT OF THE WAY, FOOLS!
WHAM
WAH!
AH!
YEAH, I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.
ISN'T THAT THE GUY WHO WON THE SCHOOL MARATHON LAST YEAR?
LET ME GO, MURATA BROTHERS!
KUMADE, STOP!!
EASY
YOUR FACE IS OFFENSIVE ENOUGH! DON'T MAKE IT WORSE BY TALKING!!
SHUT UP, GORILLA BOY!
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
GRAAH
WHO? ME?
YOU THERE!
YEAH, YOU.
...RUN LIKE A GIRL! HA HA HA...
I BET YOU...

HUH?
WHAT'S ALL THE RUCKUS?
Heh heh...
THIS IS WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. THE GIRLS CAN'T STAND HIM! HE DESERVES TO BE THE CHAMPION!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
WH- WHAT?
WH- WHAT?
EEEK!! MAD GORILLA!!
RIVAL? THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A MONKEY AND A GORILLA TEAM UP, HUH?
NAGG
GORILLA
MONKEY
FUJIWARA, THIS IS FUJII, YOUR RIVAL!
AH! FUJII!!
THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'LL KNOCK HIM OFF HIS HIGH HORSE!
YAP
YAP
FWIP
JUST WAIT, FUJII! I'LL BEAT YOU!
YEAH.
C'MON, TAKUYA. LET'S GO HOME.

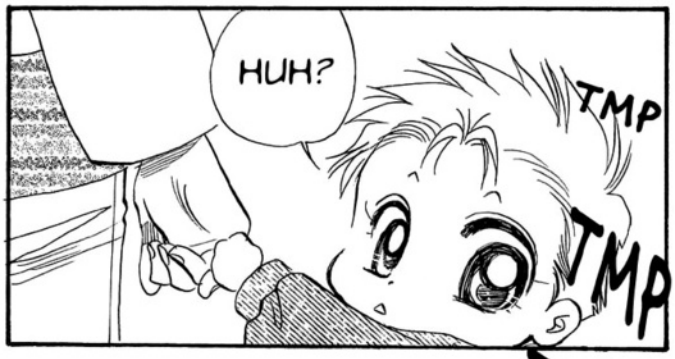
YUM ...
I WOVE CHOC'-WATE.
AN', AN'...

...I DIDN'T THINK I COULD FINISH IN THE TOP TEN, MUCH LESS WIN.


KUMADE'S HAVING ANOTHER FLARE-UP OF ENVY.
I WASN'T REALLY WORRIED ABOUT WINNING THE SCHOOL MARATHON...
...BE-CAUSE...


HFF
TMP
HFF
TMP
HFF
TMP

I WOVE MIWK, TOO.
AN' HAMBURGERS.
HA HA...
RAMBLING ON ABOUT FOOD.


HUH?
TMP
TMP
TMP

TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

OOF!!

AAAH!!

WUMP

THUD

OUT OF MY WAY!!

TMP TMP TMP

MINORU!!

SNUG

IT WAS HIS OWN FAULT! HE WAS WALKING SLOW AND INTERRUPTING MY PRACTICE! DON'T FORGET, I'M YUKIO FUJIWARA! I'M GONNA WIN THE SCHOOL MARATHON!

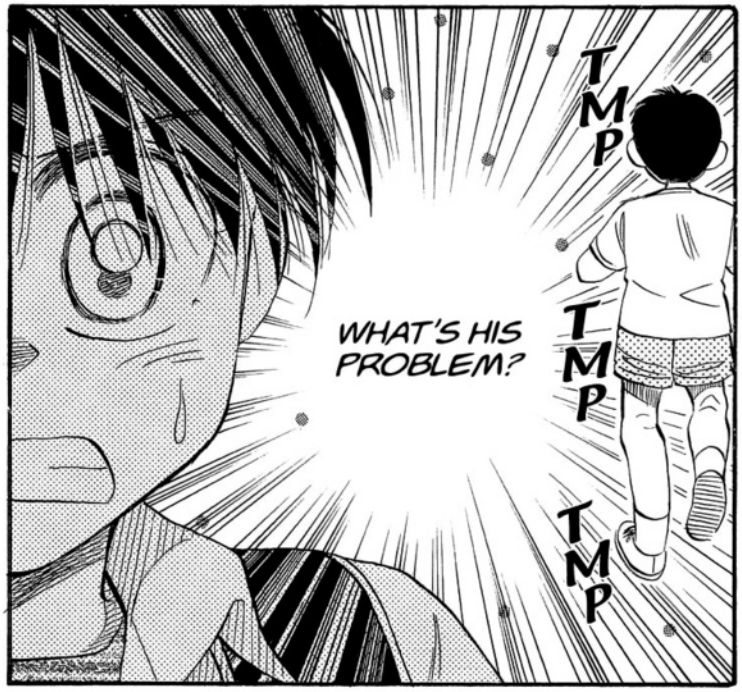
HUH?

HEY!! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO KNOCK HIM DOWN!!

...

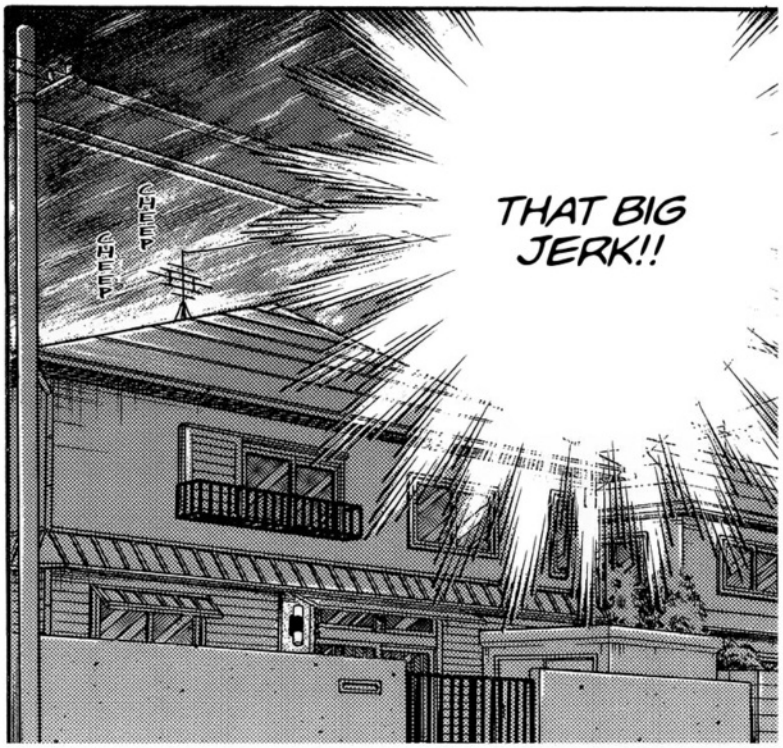
HUH?
WHO CARES?
SOB
SOB

GRR


WHAT'S HIS PROBLEM?
TMP
TMP
TMP

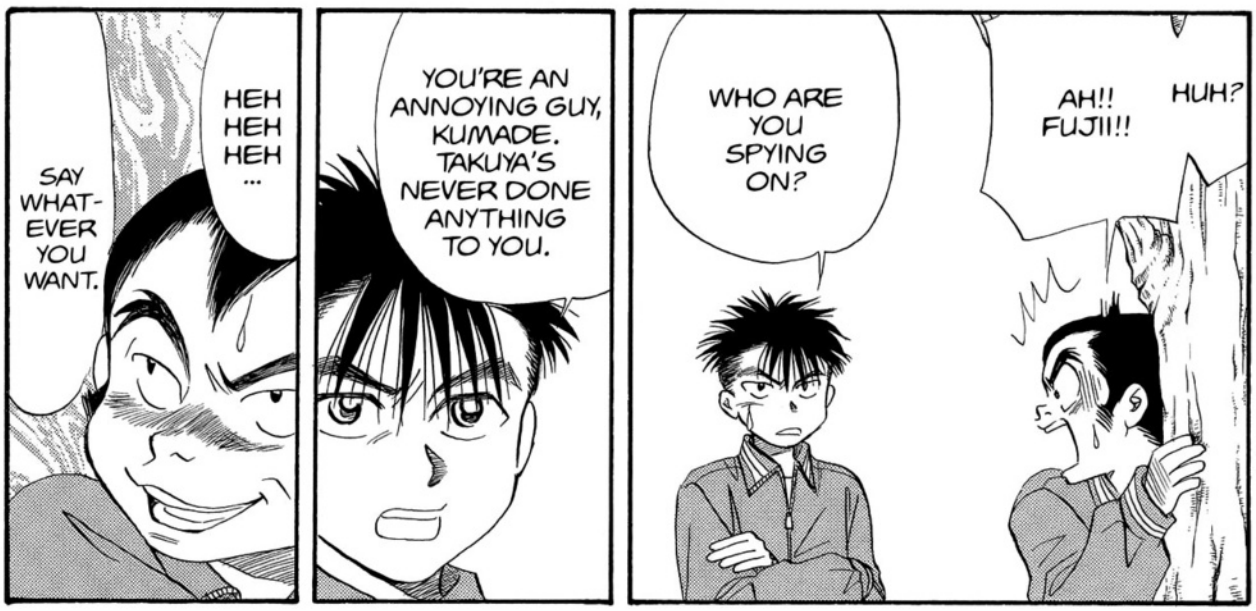
WHAT?
IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO ME, SAY IT AFTER YOU'VE BEATEN ME IN THE MARATHON RACE!
WHUP

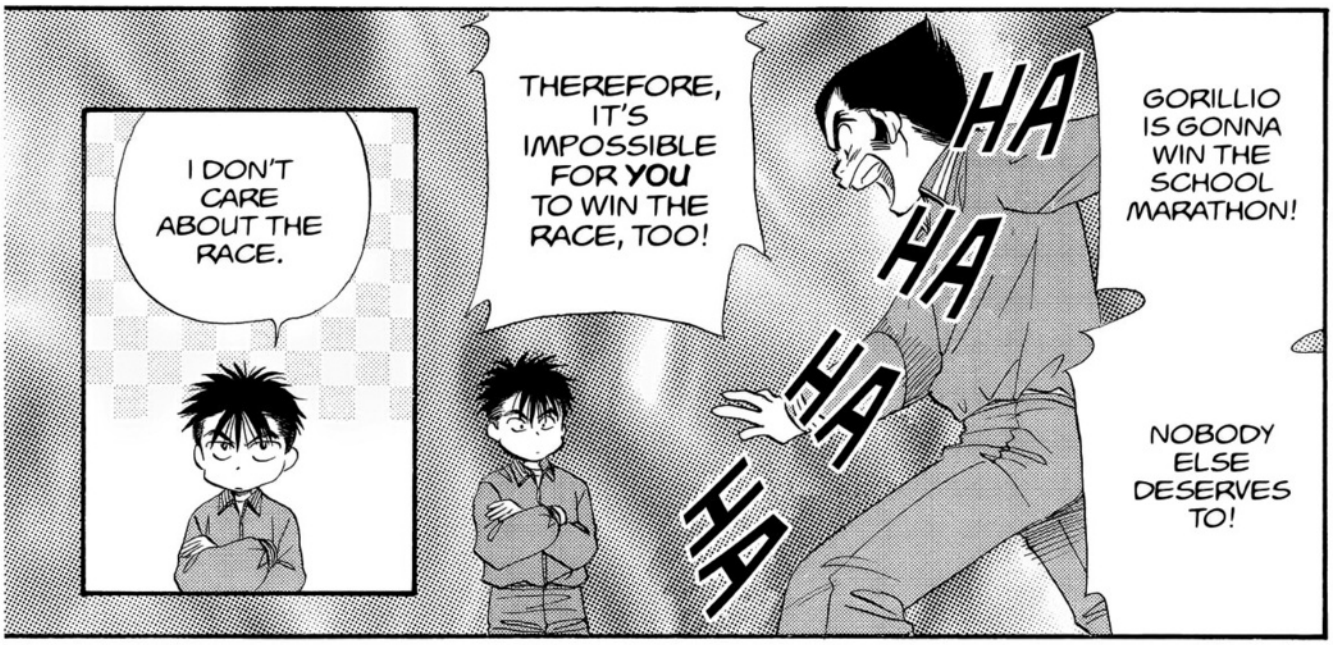
YOU'RE UP EARLY, TAKUYA.

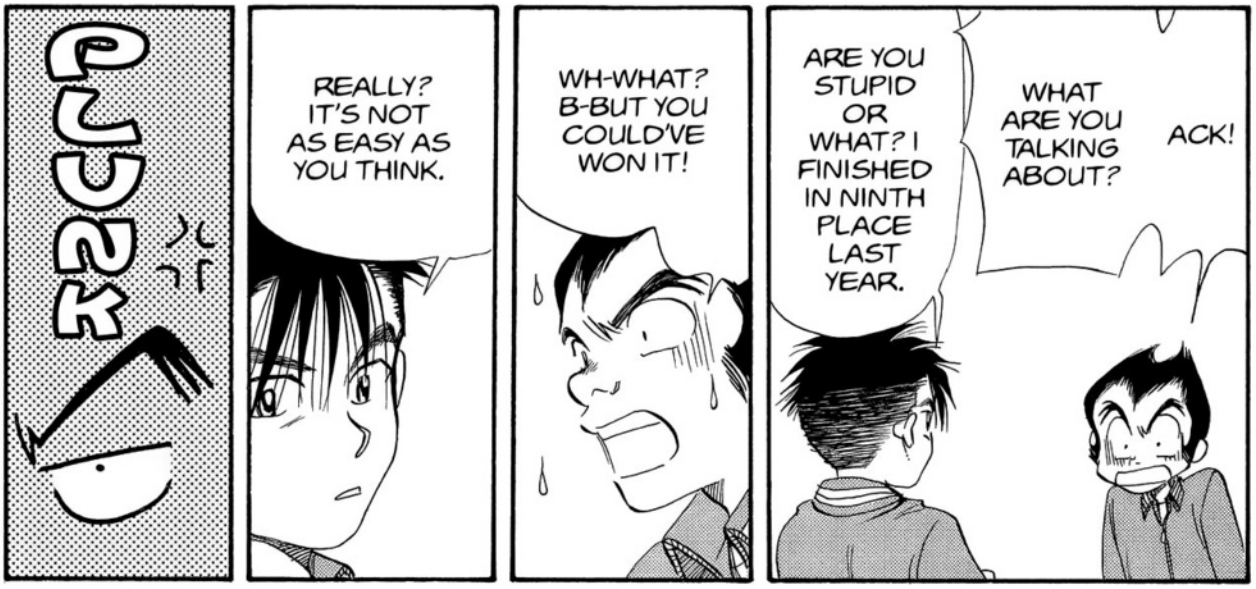

THAT BIG JERK!!
CHEEP
CHEEP

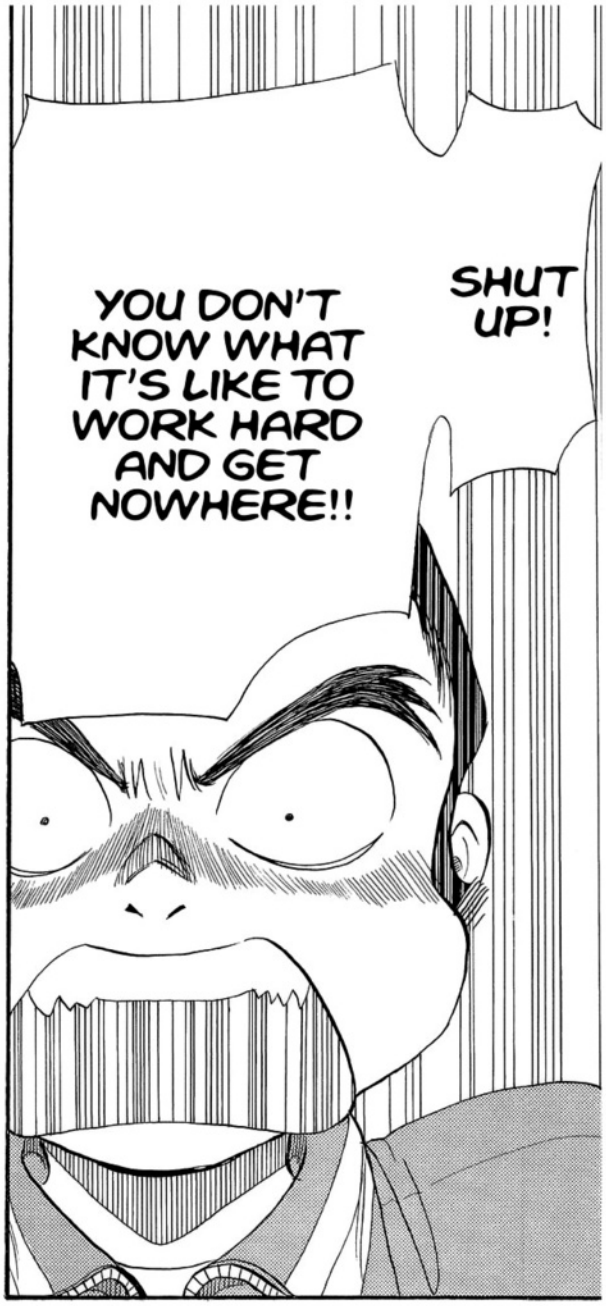
I HAVE TO TRAIN FOR THE SCHOOL MARA-THON.
DETERMINED
OH! GOOD FOR YOU!
UBB...
BWAZA?
SLEEPY
HI, MINORU.
MINORU, COME HERE.
HUH?
I'M GOING TO BEAT THAT GUY...
...FOR BOTH OF US, OKAY?
GUTS!!
OKAY.
NOD
MINORU, DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT?

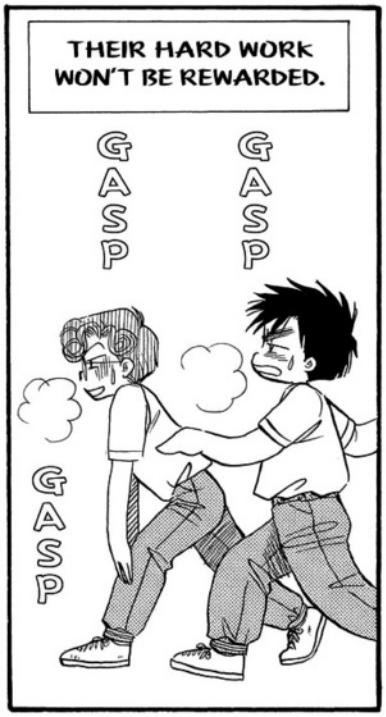
SO I STARTED A SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAM.
OTHER TRAINING IS OMITTED
HEY, TAKUYA...
WHAT'S WITH THE EYE OF THE TIGER?
FIGHT!
HFFF
HFFF
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO HIM?
WHY IS ENOKI SUDDENLY TRAINING SO HARD?
HEY.
AH, WHO CARES? HE CAN'T WIN NO MATTER HOW HARD HE TRAINS.
PSST
PSST


SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT.
HEH HEH HEH ...
YOU'RE AN ANNOYING GUY, KUMADE. TAKUYA'S NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO YOU.
WHO ARE YOU SPYING ON?
AH!! FUJII!!
HUH?


I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE RACE.
THEREFORE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR **YOU** TO WIN THE RACE, TOO!
HA HA HA HA
GORILLIO IS GONNA WIN THE SCHOOL MARATHON!
NOBODY ELSE DESERVES TO!


PUZZK
REALLY? IT'S NOT AS EASY AS YOU THINK.
WH-WHAT? B-BUT YOU COULD'VE WON IT!
ARE YOU STUPID OR WHAT? I FINISHED IN NINTH PLACE LAST YEAR.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
ACK!

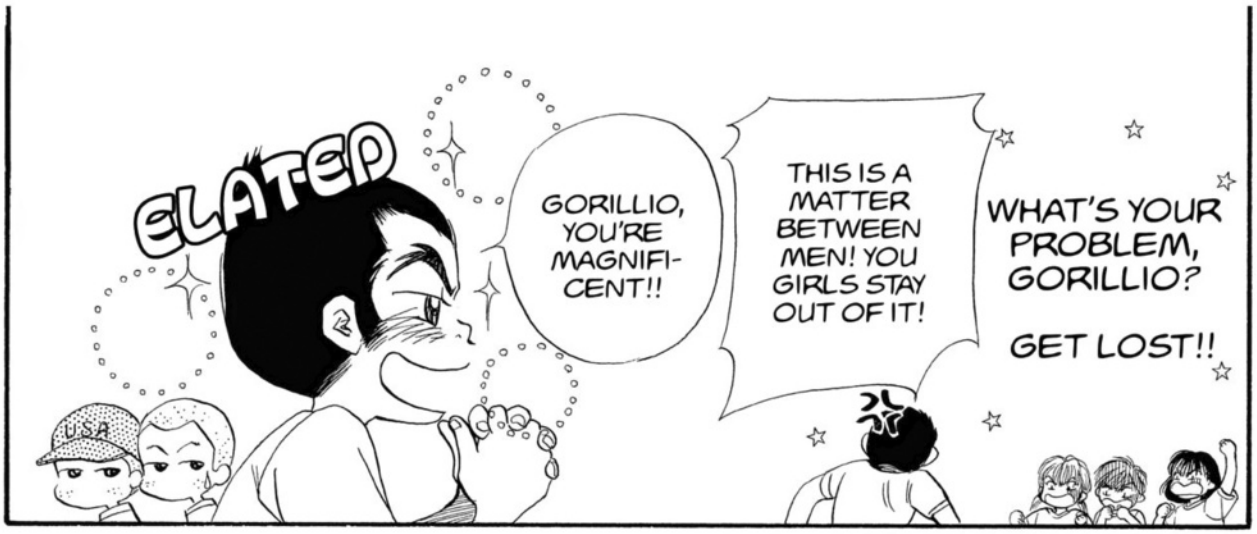




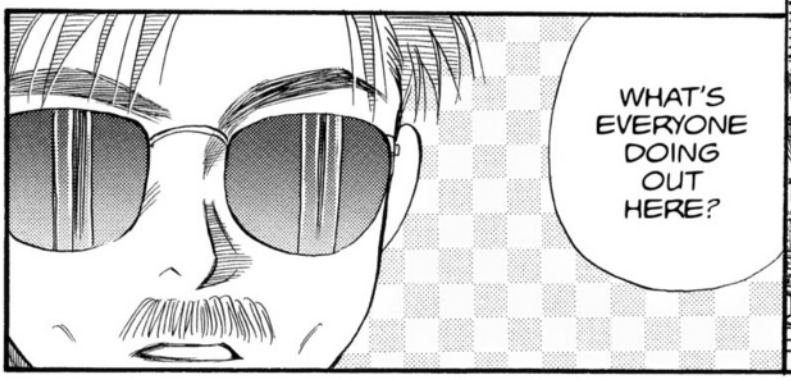
*He looks like Hyuma's sister in *Star of the Giants*.

THE DAY OF THE SCHOOL MARATHON...
KADC
KADC
KADC
KADC
SCHOOL
OH, DARN.
HA HA HA
WHAT IF MY STOMACH STARTS TO HURT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RACE?
GULP
PERSON, PERSON...*
PERSON...
*This is a common Japanese relaxation technique: drawing the kanji for "person" on one's palm and pretending to swallow it.
I SLIPPED IN THE BATHROOM AND HURT MY LEG YESTERDAY.
NOW I PROBABLY CAN'T PLACE VERY HIGH IN THE RACE.
BUT I'LL TRY MY BEST ANYWAY. ISN'T THAT BRAVE?
I DIDN'T NOTICE THAT BANDAGE THIS MORNING.
YEAH, YOU'RE AN INSPIRATION TO US ALL.

HFF
HFF
HFF
WOW, LOOK AT HIM GO.
WAAAH
YOU DON'T HAVE TO RIP ME TO PIECES!!
HEY!
NO ONE CAN BEAT ME!
YUCK
YUCK
GOOD LUCK, FUJI-WARA!
THIS IS AN ATHLETIC COMPETI-TION, NOT A POPULARITY CONTEST!
UGH!!
AAAH! OKUBO !!
CHOP
HO HO HO
YOU'RE THE FASTEST RUNNER IN JAPAN!
BUT HE GETS MEAN AROUND THIS TIME EVERY YEAR.
GORILLIO IS USUALLY SO QUIET.
WE'RE ROOTING FOR YOU, OKUBO!


ELATED
GORILLIO, YOU'RE MAGNIFICENT!!
THIS IS A MATTER BETWEEN MEN! YOU GIRLS STAY OUT OF IT!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM, GORILLIO?
GET LOST!!
U.S.A.

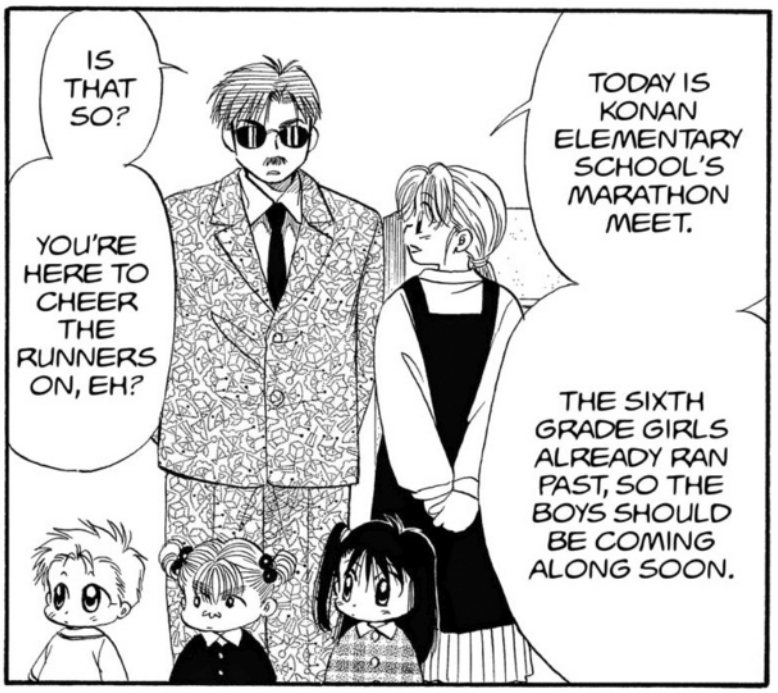
BOOM
RUNNERS TO YOUR MARKS, GET SET...
Okay!
RAH
RAH


WHAT'S EVERYONE DOING OUT HERE?

KONAN
KONAN

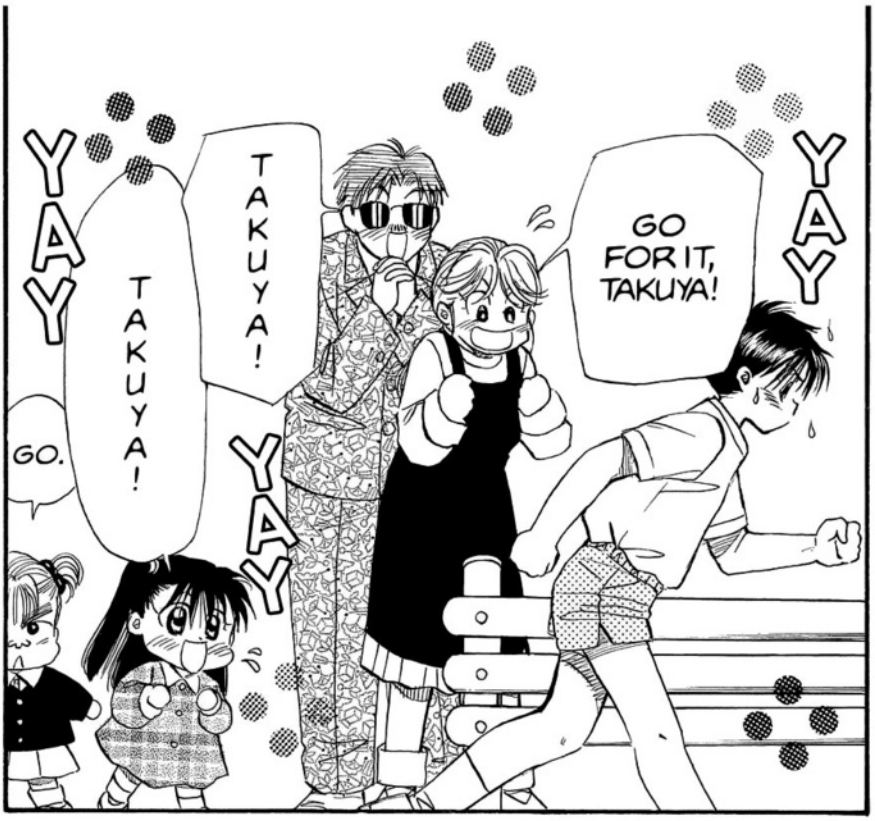
TMP
TMP
TMP

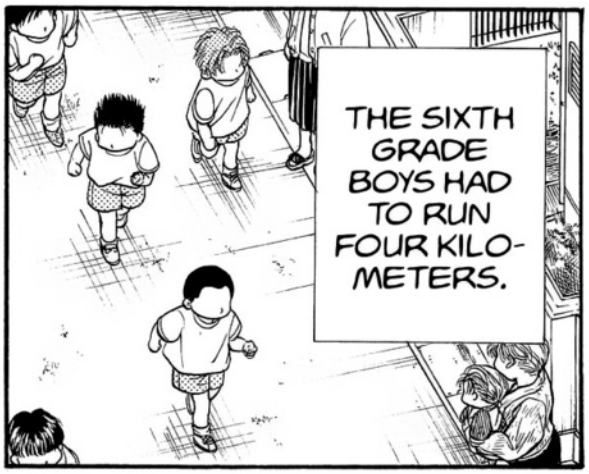
HERE COMES THE FIRST BOY!
RAH


IS THAT SO?
YOU'RE HERE TO CHEER THE RUNNERS ON, EH?
TODAY IS KONAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S MARATHON MEET.
THE SIXTH GRADE GIRLS ALREADY RAN PAST, SO THE BOYS SHOULD BE COMING ALONG SOON.

HFF
HFF
TMP TMP
A GORILLA!!
SHUT UP, BRATS!
HEY, MI-NORU.
BWAZA!
HFF
HFF
AH!
HUH?
ICHIKA ...
OH, IT'S AKIHIRO! BUT WHY ARE YOU RUNNING SO SLOWLY?

YOU SURE ARE POPULAR, ENOKI.
HOW EMBARRASSING...
HFF HFF
HFF HFF

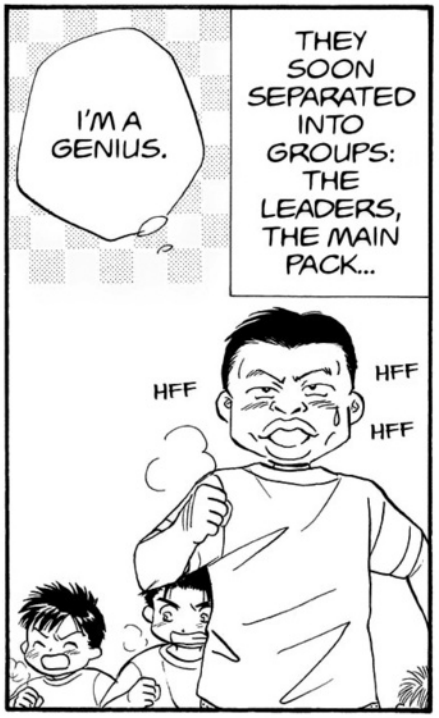

GO FOR IT, TAKUYA!
YAY
YAY
TAKUYA!
TAKUYA!
YAY
GO.


THE SIXTH GRADE BOYS HAD TO RUN FOUR KILOMETERS.

A... ACTUALLY, I'M RUNNING.
WHEN
WHEN
LOOK! HIRO'S BROTHER IS WALKING!

...A LITTLE BEHIND THE LEAD PACK.
TAKUYA TOOK UP A POSITION ...
IRON WILL
HFF
HFF
Dead serious

WHAT'S WRONG?
...AND THE WALKERS.
WHEN
WHEN
WHEN


THEY SOON SEPARATED INTO GROUPS: THE LEADERS, THE MAIN PACK...
I'M A GENIUS.
HFF
HFF
HFF

OH!
HFF
HFF
JUST DON'T MAKE YOURSELF SICK!
YOU'RE HALFWAY THERE! GOOD LUCK!
HERE COMES THE LEADER!
TMP TMP
TMP
HEY!
MR. MATSUMOTO HOMEROOM TEACHER OF GRADE 6 CLASS 2
HUH?
FUJII'S IN THIRD AND MORIGUCHI IS IN FIFTH!
THE STUDENTS FROM MY CLASS ARE DOING GREAT!
OVER-JOYED
BA-BUMP
OH!
OH!
I...I'M SO... TIRED...
HFF
HFF
TMP
TMP
TMP
HFF HFF

AND TAKUYA'S NOT EVEN A GOOD DISTANCE RUNNER!
AMAZING!
HFF HFF
HUH?
OKAY!!
YOU'RE EIGHTH, SO FAR!
GOOD LUCK, TAKUYA!
HFF HFF
TMP TMP TMP
WHEN WHEN
WHEN WHEN
WHAT PLACE AM I IN, MR. MATSUMOTO?
HFF
MR. MATSUMOTO!
BPMP
OKAY!
I'M SO TIRED. KEEP PUSHING, TAKUYA.
MORIGUCHI WAS ONE OF THEM.
HFF HFF
PUOO
PUOO
I CAN'T RUN ANYMORE.
UHGOHUGO
IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE RACE, EVEN THE LEADERS BEGAN TO TIRE...
...AND SOME EVEN STARTED TO WALK.

AND SOON ...
...GORILLIO WAS IN THE LEAD, TOSHIFUMI OKUBO WAS IN SECOND PLACE, FUJII WAS IN THIRD AND TAKUYA WAS IN FOURTH.
THOSE PERSISTENT GNATS! I'LL SHAKE THEM OFF USING PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE!
HMPH
WEEZ
HFF
TAKUYA

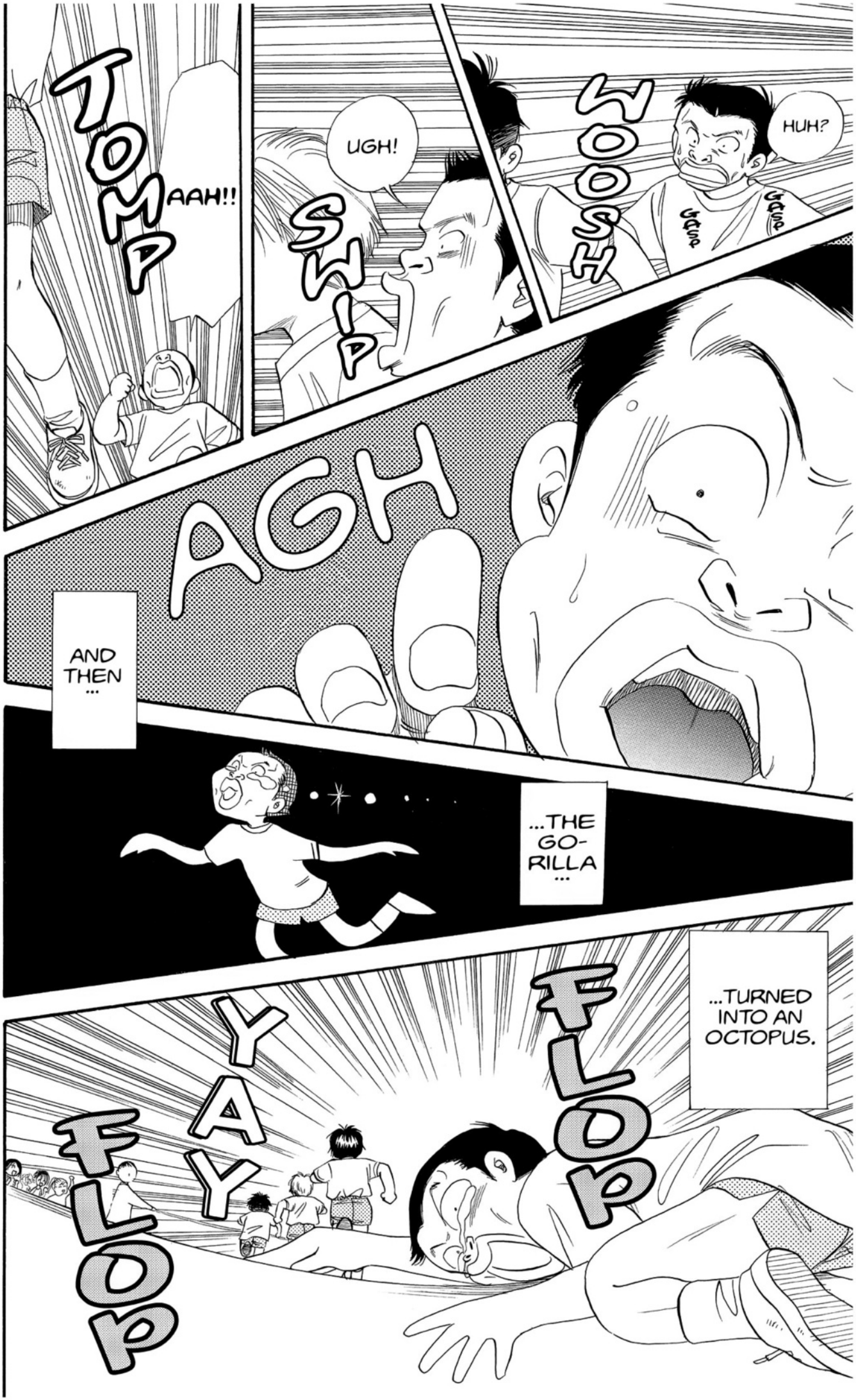
SHOOM

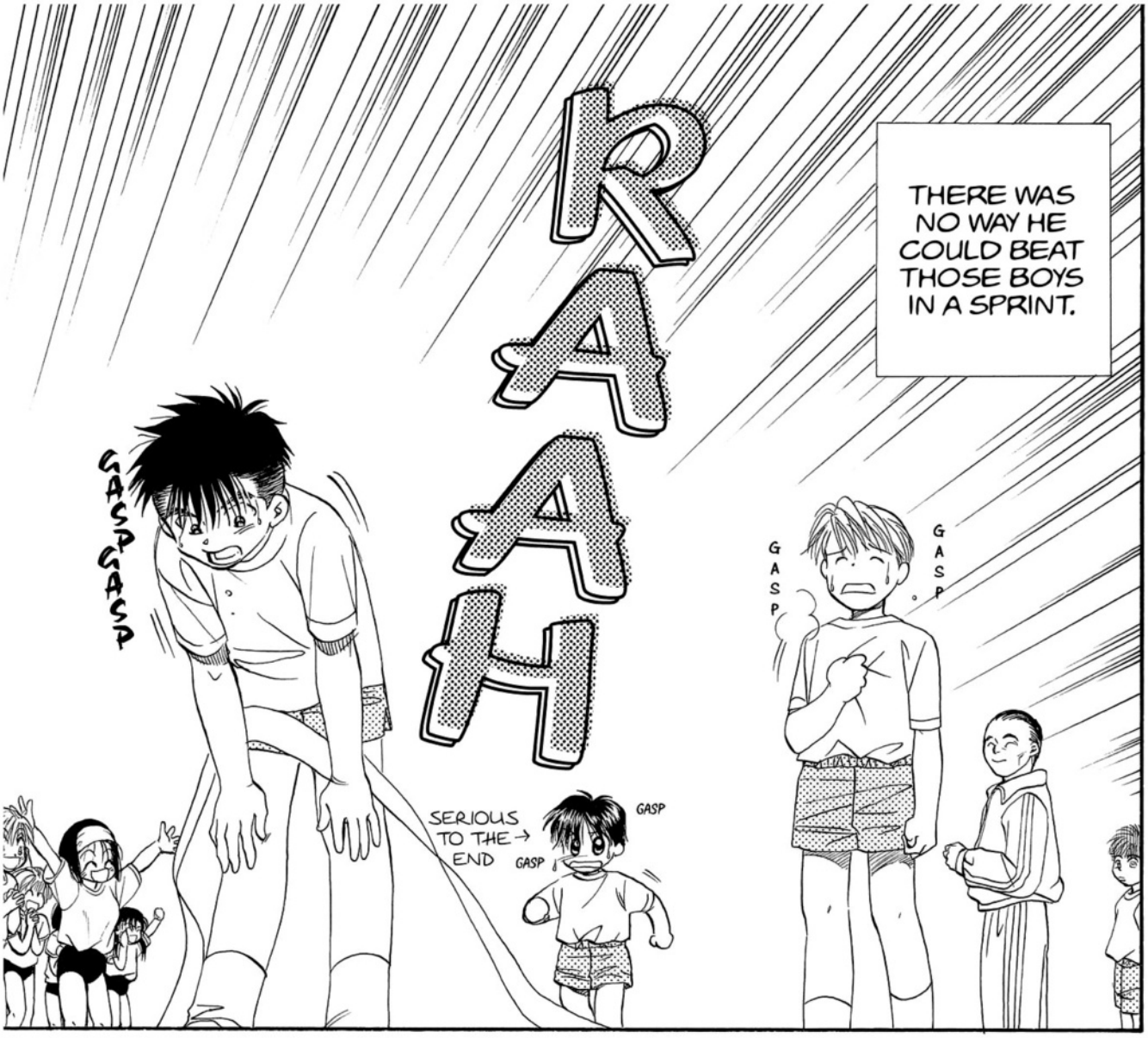
TMP TMP TMP TMP
TAKUYA
TAKUYA
HFF
HFF

SHOOM

TMP TMP TMP TMP
TAKUYA
TAKUYA
HFF
HFF

RAH
SCHOOL
GORILLIO DIDN'T NOTICE THAT HIS EFFORTS TO CONFUSE THE ENEMY HAD DEPLETED HIS OWN STAMINA.
THOSE ANNOYING MOSQUITOES!
HFF GASP
HFF GASP
WOW, WHAT A CLOSE BATTLE!
UNBELIEVABLE!
THE RACE WILL BE DECIDED ON THE TRACK!
THE FIRST OF THE SIXTH GRADE BOYS IS COMING!
TAKUYA!
OKUBO!
FUJII!
RAAH♡
SO, NATURALLY...
IT CAME DOWN TO THE FINAL SPRINT.
THE LEAD RUNNERS APPROACHED THE FINISH LINE.


TOMP
AAH!!
SWIP
UGH!
WOOSH
HUH?
AGH
AND THEN ...
...THE GO-RILLA ...
...TURNED INTO AN OCTOPUS.
FLOP
YAY
FLOP


THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD BEAT THOSE BOYS IN A SPRINT.
RAAAH
GASP GASP
GASP
GASP
SERIOUS TO THE END
GASP
GASP

THIRD? REALLY?
HFF
HFF

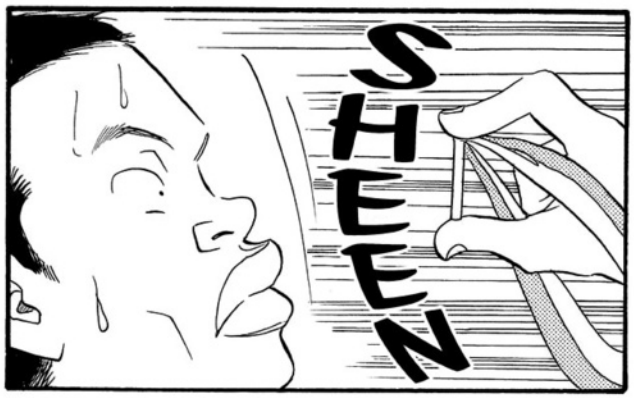
ENOKI, YOU FINISHED THIRD! GOOD JOB!
WOW!
HUH?
GASP
GASP

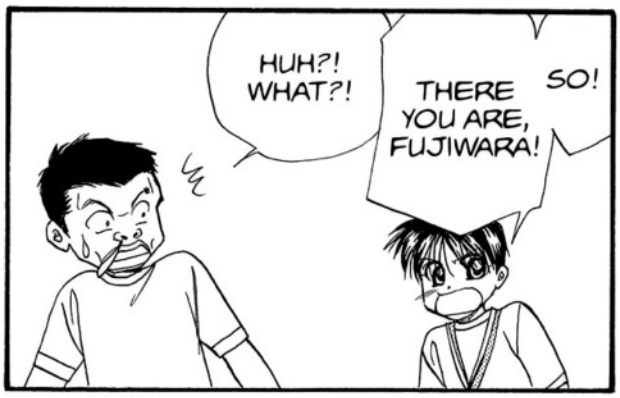
HFF
GASP
I CAN'T BREATHE!
GASP
MY LEGS ARE KILL-ING ME!

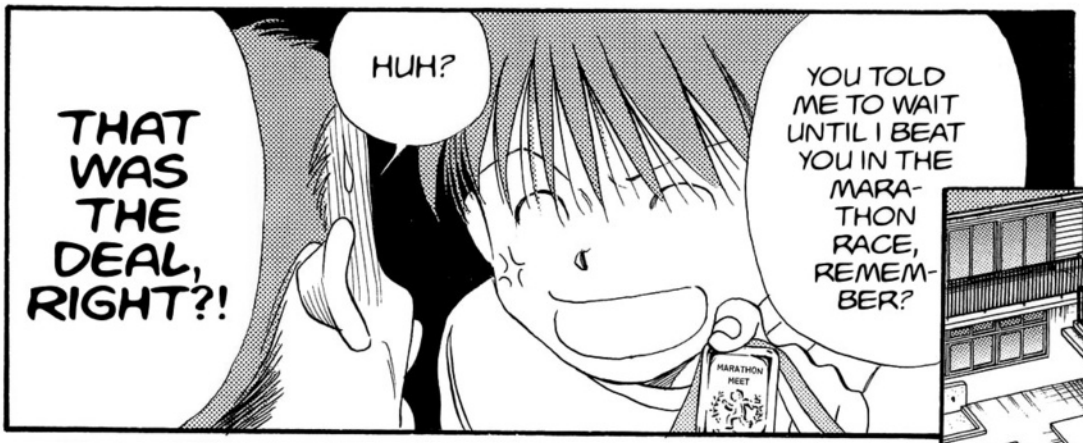
YEAH.
OH, AND I CAME IN FIRST.
HFF
HFF

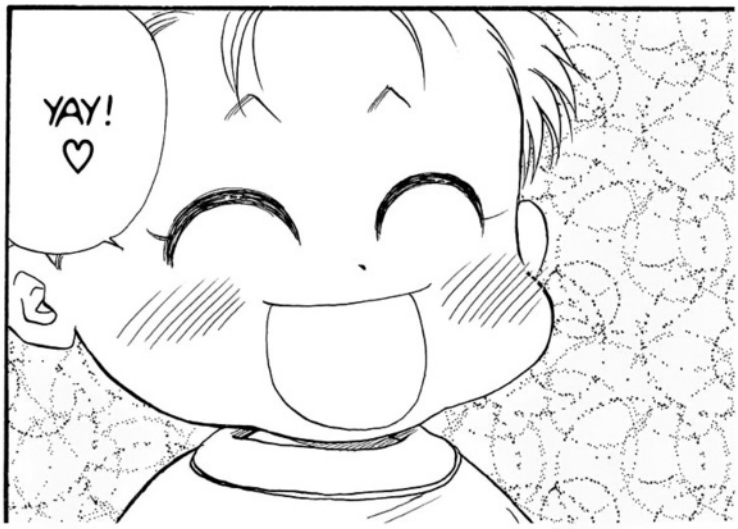
GON WAS 33RD, TAMADATE WAS 72ND AND KUMADE WAS 49TH.
Out of 77.
SCHOOL MARATHON
FIRST PLACE: FUJII.
SECOND PLACE: OKUBO.
THIRD PLACE: TAKUYA.
AND NOW FOR THE RESULTS ...
MORIGUCHI FINISHED SEVENTH AND GORILLIO ENDED UP IN FOURTEENTH.
RAH
RAH
THE REST OF THE RUNNERS ARE PASSING GORILLIO RIGHT IN FRONT OF THE FINISH LINE.
RAH
WHOA ...
Okubo
I GUESS WE SHOWED GORILLIO AND KUMADE.
RAH
I STILL DON'T LIKE DISTANCE RACES.
YOU LIAR! YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T RUN DISTANCE, BUT YOU CAME IN THIRD?
YOU'D NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW US LOSERS FEEL! WE WORK HARD AND GET NOTHING!!
ZEEZ
ZEEZ
SOB
The Murata Brothers got a certificate for being in the top ten
USA
...SO FINISHING THIRD IN MY FINAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MARATHON...
...WAS A REAL ACHIEVEMENT FOR ME.
I GOT A MEDAL.
I WAS NEVER VERY GOOD AT DISTANCE BEFORE...

*There is a Japanese saying that "God's gifts come in twos."









Chapter 97 / The End